

Session 5 David: Walking with Confidence in God (1 Sam. 18)

I. INTRODUCTION

Tonight the theme that I want to highlight is the way in which David walked in such unusual confidence with the Lord, both here in 1 Samuel 18 in our first session and then in our next session after the break in 1 Samuel 19. My desire in teaching this course is to help you get familiar with the story, because once you get familiar with the story, it is such an attractive story that you will read 1 & 2 Samuel over and over. You will devour it. It is saturation in this story that has been a strength to my heart. You have to be familiar with the main players and the storyline.

In one of our sessions I identified ten defining characteristics in David's life. One of David's most defining characteristics, one of his primary identifying characteristics, is his confidence. When you become confident in God, the implications on your mind, your emotions, your prayer life, your relationships, are staggering. They are vast. The implications are dynamic.

The enemy wants you to have fear, not confidence, in your relationship with God. The enemy wants you to feel accused and condemned. The enemy wants you confused, perplexed, thinking, "Lord, I do not know about Your leadership." The thing that is so striking about David in his youth—he is about twenty years old, early twenties here in 1 Samuel 18—was the confidence that he had because of his early history with the Lord.

- A. I Samuel 18 gives insight into David's heart in a season when his circumstances changed in dramatic ways. We see his confidence in God in times of unusual blessing as well as in adversity.

We get insight into David's heart here because his circumstances in this chapter change so radically from extreme positives to extreme negatives in a short amount of time. They go back and forth quite a few times in 1 Samuel 18-20. Unusual blessing with unusual adversity, but the thing that strikes me is the confidence that David had in both situations and the humility that he had when he was blessed and also when he was being attacked.

- B. David killed Goliath, saving the nation from a military disaster (1 Sam. 17). This thrust him into national prominence. David experienced favor with Saul's family, the staff of the royal court, the army, and the nation in general (18:5, 28-30). His life changed dramatically from the quiet life of a shepherd in Bethlehem to a high-ranking officer in the military, serving in the king's court. He moved to Gibeah to live and serve in Saul's court, the governmental headquarters of Israel.

Now the context is the chapter before, 1 Samuel 17, so David had just killed Goliath. He had saved the nation from a military disaster that would have resulted in many people going into slavery or getting killed. It was a military disaster and crisis for the land, and this thrust David into national prominence. We will find as we read this story that he had favor with the king himself. I mean the president—the king—loved him. He had favor with the king's family; the family loved him, not just the king himself.

In the king's court, the royal court, the army, the nation in general, everywhere he turned, he was being affirmed and celebrated. What a radical shift from the quiet life of the pastures of Bethlehem where his family rejected him! He had seven older brothers, but he was a bit of a loner in his own family as the youngest brother and clearly rejected by his family, about which we have gone into a little bit in other sessions. Now he has moved to Gibeah, the governmental headquarters. He is living in the king's court and serving there.

- C. David had favor with two of King Saul's six children: Saul's oldest son, Jonathan, the heir to the throne (18:1, 3), and his youngest daughter, Michal, whom David married, thus joining the royal family himself (18:20-27). Saul had four sons and two daughters (1 Chr. 8:33; 9:39; 1 Sam. 14:49).

I want you to get familiar with two of King Saul's six children: Jonathan who was the oldest son, the heir to the throne, and Michal the youngest daughter whom David married.

- D. David had great favor with Saul until Saul's angry reaction to women singing of David's military victories (18:6-9). Then David lost his job in the royal court, and Saul sought to kill him (18:10-11).

Things were going great for David until he was praised, affirmed, and celebrated at too big a level, then the king became jealous. The women in the nation were singing songs celebrating David's military achievements and the power of God on his life. It did not go to David's head, but it went to Saul's head. David was unmoved by it.

- E. In chapter 18 we see that David walked with confidence in God in times of testing—in seasons of being praised as well as in great adversity. Trouble came to David when the Lord allowed him to be trained to be a great king, using the deception and murderous rage of a demonized king—Saul.

We see that David has confidence in his walk as he is tested with praise, affirmation, and promotion. At the same time, he is tested with great adversity and pressure. Remember he is a young man in his early twenties, the age of many of you in this room right now.

Here is the thing I want to introduce to you, and I will say this several times over the course: when the Lord wants to raise up a leader after His own heart, which He wants to do with many of you, beware or be informed that the Holy Spirit enrolled David into seminary of Saul, a demonized king, a demonized leader who would mistreat David so that David's humility and love and confidence would all come into fullness. So you want to be a leader after God's own heart like David? Understand the Holy Spirit enrolled him in the seminary of Saul. Are you aware that you might experience some of those pressures in your twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty-year ministry?

- F. **The Gibeah years** (1 Samuel 17-20; approximately 18-23 years old): David's identity was tested and strengthened by success and adversity at the same time. The question was, could David connect with God amid many pressures in the same way he had in the security and solitude of Bethlehem?

I want to review from our second session what I call the Gibeah years. Now remember Gibeah is the city where the governmental headquarters were located, where Saul's royal court was. In these years David is about eighteen to twenty-three years old. We cannot be sure. That is a guesstimation, but it is a fairly accurate one. This was maybe a four or five-year period. His identity was being tested. We went through this, so I will not spend time on this. His identity was being strengthened. It was being tested and strengthened with promotion and blessing, tested and strengthened with pressure and adversity.

The question: could David connect with God in the same humility and confidence when he was being celebrated and promoted? Could he connect with God in the same way when he was being attacked and demoted? If he could, then his identity was strong and established. That is the Lord's goal and that is the Lord's agenda in our lives.

- G. This period lasted about 4-5 years. It was a time of much honor, uncertainty, and danger, ending with David being pursued as an outlaw and fugitive by 3,000 government-financed soldiers.

- H. David grew up in the small rural town of Bethlehem before joining the royal court to serve on the king's personal staff. He joined the fast pace of the royal court, encountering many new people and agendas and changing situations. David must have experienced some *culture shock* when he moved to Gibeah to live and work in Saul's royal court (18:2).
- I. The Holy Spirit set David and Saul side by side (1 Sam. 18-19) to give us instruction, warning, and encouragement. Both men were chosen for leadership and anointed by the Spirit. The same God with the same resources was available to both. With David there was a steady growth in grace, while with Saul there was a continual increase in compromise, oppression, and perversion. One life ended in victory, the other in tragedy. Saul began so well and could have been all that David was.

1 Samuel 18-19 are the two chapters we will consider tonight. 1 Samuel 19 is our next session after the break. The Holy Spirit sets young David and old Saul side by side. In the way the story is told we see them contrasted through quite a few chapters, but particularly 1 Samuel 18-19. The reason the Holy Spirit set these two types of leaders in comparison is that these two types of leaders are actually in the Body of Christ, are leading ministries and leading businesses, even in context to the kingdom.

As we see the biblical record of these two types of leaders, we are to be instructed what to be—like David—and what not to be—like Saul. A lot of folks aim to receive the instruction of what to be in terms of modeling David, but we are to also be equally instructed on what not to be. Because, you see, Saul started off humble. Saul started off very similarly to David. He was little in his own eyes. He was humble. He was obedient. He had a heart for God. Over time and over the years of leadership with success and trials he morphed; he turned into something else, little by little, not in one day.

We are to get a warning and we are to receive encouragement as we see these lives set together, both of them having been chosen for leadership by God. They were set apart prophetically by the great prophet in the land. They were both anointed with an unusual measure of power of the Holy Spirit. They had the same God, the same resources, but David grew continually in humility. He grew in grace. His obedience towards the Lord was confirmed and deepened over the years. He had failures, but he came back fiercely in his commitment to obey. Whereas Saul continually increased in his compromise, and then the oppression and after that perversion came along with his compromise, David ended up with a remarkable victory, the model in the Old Testament of walking with God. Saul's life is a tragedy, and he is the picture of what not to do as a leader anointed by the Spirit and confirmed by prophetic ministry. Saul began so well, and we see that Saul could have been very similar to David, but he went the other direction.

- J. **The test:** Can David stay humble and grateful in seasons of praise and mistreatment? Can he maintain a servant heart when exalted, and not attack when corrected or slandered? We will respond to praise in the same way that we respond to criticism, and to promotion in the same way that we respond to unjust demotion. It is not one decision that shapes our destiny, but many.

Here is really the application of it. I am giving it to you before we get into the story, and I find the story fascinating. It moves along pretty fast. Here is the real takeaway, here on page one of the notes, so you can apply this to the story. Can David stay humble and can he stay grateful in both seasons, promotion and demotion? Can he stay grateful or will he get offended and start complaining about leaders and complaining to God? Which one will dominate David's inward conversation? Can he maintain a servant heart? When he gets more power, will he begin to lay aside the servant attitude that he came into his leadership position with?

Here is a spiritual law of the kingdom. I mentioned this earlier. You will respond to praise the same way you respond to criticism. It is a spiritual law. If criticism throws you off, I mean really throws you off, it is because

you are valuing the opinion of man too much, and then praise will throw you off. Now all of us usually get a lot more criticism before we get praise in our life. So we imagine that praise would not move us, that it would be just a nice break to get some significant promotion in our life.

The Lord knows that if you get defensive and offended by criticism it means you are living by the opinion of man. Praise will throw you off if criticism does. I don't mean that you get to the place where you are completely immune to criticism, but where it is not a dominate voice in your heart. When it is, we repent of it, and we sign back up to make what God says about us the dominate voice, the strong voice we hear in our heart and our inner man.

It is the same way with promotion and demotion, the way that you handle being demoted. Everyone is going to be demoted, almost everybody, a time or two in their life in the sports team, the music team, the marketplace, the ministry world. Most people are going to have a demotion or two over the course of the decades of their life. The way that you respond to demotion I tell you for sure is the way you will respond to promotion. I am talking about in the secret place of your heart.

If demotion takes you out, it is because your identity is on how much authority, impact, and position you have in the sight of men. Promotion will do the negative to you. So when we are stung by criticism and demotion, which is natural, then we realign our heart. "Lord, I live by who You say I am. I live by how You think about me." We realign our heart over and over, and that is what David did in the early days.

II. DAVID'S SEASON OF PROMOTION IN GIBEAH (1 SAM. 18:1-5)

A. Life in Saul's court and David's favor in the nation (18:1-5)

¹Now when he [David] had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. ²Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore. ³Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. ⁴And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt. ⁵So David went out wherever Saul sent him, and behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants...¹⁶But all Israel and Judah loved David. (1 Sam. 18:1-5, 16)

Let's get right into the story. 1 Samuel 18:1, "Now when David had just finished speaking to Saul." The sentence before this was back in 1 Samuel 17 where they are talking about Goliath. So 1 Samuel 18 is connected right to 1 Samuel 17. They are having this conversation about David defeating Goliath, the great threat to the nation being answered, and the crisis being over. Now they introduce Jonathan to David. Jonathan is Saul's oldest son. He is heir to the throne in the natural. The heart of Jonathan was knit to the heart of David. Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Now the Jonathan-David story is going to be developed more next week in 1 Samuel 20. We will see the story develop far more there than we do here, although we get quite a bit of information here.

Here is one of the messages. God went ahead of David and set Jonathan in place. When David came into the royal court, the Lord had an ally for him. Now what is so interesting is that Jonathan should have seen David as his rival because he was the new kid several years younger. I do not know how many years younger, but a bit younger. Jonathan has been waiting to be the king after his father at the end of Saul's life, but this new kid is clearly in line. Jonathan had heard the story that God has anointed this other man to take his place.

Jonathan has this remarkable response of, "Lord, if that is what You want, I like him. I am going to do what You want, and if it is that he has a higher place than I do, that is good." I mean this is remarkable. Their relationship

and their kinship is introduced into the story, and there are many points to it. One of them is the Lord is telling David that He set things up ahead of time because David was going to have a hard time in the royal court. He placed evidences that He was working on David's behalf even before he got there.

Verse 2, "Saul took David that day." This means he asked David to move from Bethlehem to Gibeah and to become a permanent part of his staff, his inner team, to live there in the royal court and serve there. He would not let him go back to Bethlehem, because David had been going back and forth the last couple of years. He said, "No, no, I need you full-time. I want you to be done with being a shepherd in Bethlehem." David's life was radically changed. It was not a going back and forth like he had been the last couple of years from Bethlehem to Gibeah, from tending the sheep to playing music for the king when he felt oppressed.

Verse 3, Jonathan and David made a covenant. Now this covenant had very significant political ramifications as well as relational ramifications. Jonathan loved him as he loved his own soul. That is, he was saying, "I have as much energy and zeal for your prosperity, David, as I do for my own. I have as much zeal for your calling in God as my calling in God. I have as much interest in seeing your promotion as I do my own promotion."

Verse 4, Jonathan took off his royal robe. Remember he was the prince; he was the heir to the throne. So he took off his royal garment and he did the unthinkable—he gave David the princely robe. That is pretty intense. He took off his armor, his sword, his bow, his belt, and he submitted them to David and laid them down at David's feet.

Verse 5 returns to David and Saul as the narrative gives us the context of David and Jonathan's friendship. Now we are going back to the king and David. David went out wherever Saul sent him, because up until that time David would only visit Gibeah, the royal court, to play music for the king to refresh him. The anointing of the Spirit would touch the king as young David would play. Now Saul says, "David, since I know the Lord is with you in military things, and you have had this tremendous success, I am going to send you on military assignments."

It says that David behaved wisely. It is interesting that in the Hebrew the word "wisely" is often translated as "prospered," because to act wise and to prosper are nearly synonymous in the Old Testament from the Hebrew point of view. So if a man or woman was called wise, almost always it meant they prospered. If they prospered, it usually meant they were wise. It is not 100 percent, but nearly synonymous. So therefore some Bible translations say, "and David prospered" instead of "David behaved wisely" because they are so intricately connected.

So David went out wherever Saul sent, and this meant on military excursions and military assignments. He was not running errands for Saul. It was a military context. He succeeded, and then, even as a young man—remember he is twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three—Saul the king sat him over the men of war. Wow! A lot of the men of war had been in the army for a decade or two, and here was this young guy, brand new on the scene, and now he was their boss. Well, it is more complicated than that! Three of David's brothers were in the army, and now David was one of the top leaders. He was not the absolute top; a man named Abner was the top general.

David sat in the inner court with Abner. He was over the men of war, meaning he was in kind of the top cabinet of the military leadership as a young man. I mean the other guys were probably all fifty, sixty, seventy years old, who knows? There was this guy twenty-one, twenty-two, big smile, carried his guitar with him, and had the anointing of God on his life.

Instead of the army being jealous and despising this, instead of the royal court thinking, "Who is the new guy, the new favorite of the king?"—because when a new guy comes in, and he is the king's favorite, that makes everybody else not like the new guy—David was accepted in the sight of the people, even with Saul's servants, even within the royal court, in the staff. They were not threatened by him. What was David doing that they were not threatened by him? After all, it would be very natural for them to feel threatened by him. The only man who

ended up threatened by David was the king himself. It says in verse 16, “All of Israel loved David.” I mean his popularity was remarkable.

- B. **Saul took David:** David moved to Gibeah to serve in the king’s court, the government headquarters.
- C. **Made a covenant:** The covenant between Jonathan and David was expressed by Jonathan’s gift of his robe and armor to David.
- D. **Robe:** Jonathan’s robe spoke of his position of authority as heir to his father’s throne. Jonathan gave David his princely robe that was reserved for the heir to the throne. Jonathan was essentially handing to David the right of succession to the throne, because he understood that God had called David to be king. Taking off his robe can also speak of Jonathan’s commitment to not hide himself from David, but to be open, honest, and vulnerable, and not conceal his heart from David.

Well, we are going to tease this apart a little bit. Jonathan gave his royal robe. Now the robe spoke of his position of authority, his political position, his military influence. He gave his position of authority, particularly politically as the heir to the father’s throne, to David. Now that is a political application wherein he was saying, “I know who you are. You are the rightful heir to this robe and the throne.” I mean this is remarkable because remember that Jonathan, from when he was ten, twelve, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, was being groomed all of his life to be the king. Now the taking off his robe—this is a famous passage where Jonathan and David made a covenant—is a political covenant as well as a relational one. Typically we look at it relationally and sometimes, if you do not understand there is a bigger story, just as two men or two believers making a covenant to love one another.

I have seen people make this covenant, and it has been a blessing. I have seen many people get really burned out when they misuse it or do not understand it and it ends up becoming a very controlling, negative thing. For forty years I have watched people make covenants with one another based on this passage, and a lot of them do not understand the larger ramifications. These are the two men who are arguably heirs to the throne.

It is political as well as relational. In taking off the robe in the relational sense he was telling David, “I am not going to hide my heart from you. I am going to uncover myself to you. I am going to be honest. I am going to be vulnerable. I am not going to conceal my feelings, my emotions. I am going to be straightforward.” That is what that would mean relationally as people interpret it, and that is a beautiful thing.

- E. **Armor:** Jonathan’s armor (his sword, bow, and belt) included his weapons of war. In other words, Jonathan was committing to fight David’s battles even to death: I will fight for you and stick with you. I will put my shield up for you and draw my sword to fight for you and never fight against you. At that time, giving armor was also a way to make an alliance.

His armor, his sword, his bow, and his belt were weapons of war. What Jonathan was saying both politically and relationally was, “David, I will fight your battles with you. You are not alone. Even if I die in the process, I will use my sword to fight with you and never against you, and I will use my shield to defend you. I will do this.”

We see in the next chapter how he does it relationally for David. He says, “I will go on the line for you. You will never see me against you. I will only be for you out there in the larger world.” It does not mean they would never have a disagreement in their personal relationship, but he means that “in the development of your life and your career and your ministry I am always fighting for your increase.”

- F. They were both committed to using their position, status, and resources to support each other. Jonathan was heir to the throne, one of the wealthiest and most powerful men in the nation. The most natural way for Jonathan to both treat David would be as a rival to his position in the kingdom.

Well, it was a mutual commitment. They were committing to use their position, their status, their resources to support one another in their ministries, their political careers, and their relationship together. Now this was big to David because David was a poor shepherd boy. Jonathan was probably one of the wealthiest young men in the nation, being heir to the throne, and certainly one of the most powerful men in the nation. So he was bringing a whole lot to the table. Jonathan saw things in David from God. It would have been so natural for Jonathan again to really be jealous of David. He should have been the one attacking David from the natural point of view, not his father. They would have been natural rivals, but they were not rivals. This is a remarkable reality.

- G. Their love had significant personal and political implications (18:16, 22, 28; 20:17). They were bound together by mutual affection and loyalty in friendship and their service in the kingdom.
- H. This depth of relationship is a precious and rare gift from God. Friendship is necessary for realizing who we are and becoming who the Lord created us to be. In healthy kingdom relationships we do not seek to restrict or control each other, but to free and enrich one another.

This depth of relationship is so precious. It is a gift of God. Deep friendship in the kingdom is necessary. Do not wait for someone to make you their friend. Go be their friend and let them respond just as they do. I know a lot of folks just wait around forever and say, "Well, I am in the kingdom. I am in the church. Where are my friends?" They are waiting for somebody to befriend them. That is a guaranteed way to end up with no friends. Sit on row ten in the church for twenty years, waiting for someone to become your friend, and you will sit there alone for twenty years more times than not. Rather, go be a friend. Go give yourself, and then let the others respond as they respond. Some will and some will not respond.

Here is the point I want to make: deep friendships are very necessary. They are necessary to realize who we are in God; they are necessary to become who God created us to be. Part of my inheritance in the Lord and part of my growth in the Lord is in the hands and the hearts of other believers. No man is an island; nobody is by themselves self-contained. Much of my increase, much of my insight, much of my security, much of my joy in the kingdom is connected and put into the hands and hearts of others. I am talking about the relational dynamics. Part of what I need to grow in God is in their hands. So you do not want to isolate yourself. Some folks go completely the other way; they are so engaged in so many things they do not ever go deep in God. I am talking about the other direction now.

Lest you approach this very glorious reality of this covenant relationship in a naïve way, be careful. I have forty years of watching people do this in unbiblical and naïve ways concerning this holy thing. They end up using the covenant relationship to try to control and restrict people. "Hey, we are under covenant, brother! That means you need to do what I asked you. We are under covenant." I have seen that happen many times, but not always. I have seen some glorious examples of doing this the right way as well.

- I. 1 Samuel 20 develops this relationship. David called Jonathan his brother when lamenting his death (2 Sam. 1:26).
- J. The Lord went before David to prepare the way, establishing an ally in the right time and place. This was God's provision for David to have a friend in the enemy's household. In difficult times, the Lord often prepares an ally to show us kindness. David's life was protected by this relationship.

As I said, one of the messages is that the Lord went ahead of David and set up this ally in the king's court, as the king's court was going to be hostile to David. He did not know that at first. He had a couple years where everything he touched to turned to gold. It seemed like that for a while, but it was going to be a very hostile, dangerous place.

Even in your life, as you touch blessing, there will often be a down side to a promotion. The enemy is raging at every angle. The Lord has allies for you. He has people already in place, He is putting them in place, setting it up years ahead of time, to be a blessing to you in different seasons of promotion and seasons of attack. So you do not have to get focused on the attack or the promotion, but you can stay focused on loving God, loving people, and doing the will of God.

III. DAVID'S PROMOTION (1 SAM. 18:5)

- A. Saul gave David a high-ranking position in the army (18:5). This position was an intervention of God's favor to prepare David to be the great warrior king of Israel.

⁵So David went out wherever Saul sent him, and behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants. (1 Sam. 18:5)

David had this high ranking position. He went out wherever Saul sent him. He was accepted in the sight of all the people. He had this tremendous affirmation on the front end.

- B. ***Went out:*** David went on many expeditions and grew in military experience and prowess (18:5, 30).
- C. ***Behaved wisely:*** David behaved wisely (18:5). Some Bible translations say, "David prospered." From a Hebrew perspective, acting wisely and prospering are nearly synonymous. He behaved wisely in relation to his sudden national popularity. He did not use his position to manipulate people or situations. The people under him were not threatened, because he operated in humility.

*Here is where I will develop the idea of prospering and being wise being nearly synonymous. What the Holy Spirit is emphasizing here is that David acted wisely in the context of being promoted. A lot of folks can act wisely **until** they get promoted. I mean that when they have a lot of influence and access to finance and access to powerful people. often men and women of God will begin to change the way they relate to people. They use the prominence, the increased influence and the access to wealth and prominent people to manipulate and do things to other people.*

In context to his promotion, David is portrayed as opposite of that by his acting wisely. He stayed in humility. He maintained a servant's heart. He stayed lowly in his heart. He stayed trusting the Lord instead of thinking, "Well, I am so busy now being famous and popular. Lord, I love You..." and kind of blow the Lord a few kisses on the way to being famous.

This is a really important commitment to make as young people. You set your heart and you say, "Lord, in my ministry, in my marketplace job, in my sphere of influence that You have to assigned me over the years if it does create a tremendous influence or notoriety, I am not going to get too busy for You and I am not going to change the way I live. I will still mow the lawn; that is, I will still do the lowly work. I will still take correction from somebody lower than me without being defensive. I will still have my heart open and not say, 'How dare you tell me that I am wrong! Do you know who I am?'" David was the opposite of that. It is the setting of the heart in your youth that makes this story so important.

IV. SAUL BECAME JEALOUS (1 SAM. 18:6-16)

- A. Saul became angry and jealous after the women sang of David's military success (18:6-9). When David returned from killing the Philistines, the women sang of his military success as their husbands, sons, and brothers returned safely from battle (18:5-6). Saul became angry and jealous, and viewed David with suspicion. This was the turning point in David's relationship with Saul.

⁶...when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel...to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments. ⁷So the women sang as they danced, and said: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." ⁸Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed only thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?" ⁹So Saul eyed David from that day forward.
(1 Sam. 18:6-9)

Well, Saul becomes jealous. This is the turning point right here in verses 6-8. David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistines because you know Saul had commissioned him to these military excursions, these assignments. So he would go out as a military man, as a captain now. He would come back with tremendous victories. He was this young man in his early twenties, and they are asking, "How are you doing this? How are you motivating and deploying soldiers far more experienced than you? You understand the landscape of war. How are you getting this?" Of course the Lord was helping him.

He would come back, and the women would be so excited by the military victory because it meant their husbands were not killed. Their brothers, their sons, were not killed in war. They were saying, "David, however you are doing this, thank you! Our husbands have come back! Our sons have come back! Our brothers have come back!" The economy was not being destroyed by an invading army like it was in those early days.

Well, the women would come out of all of the cities to meet King Saul, as the military was marching back to Gibeah. Because Saul would go on a number of the military campaigns, though not all of them. They would pass through the city and the villages on their way back to Gibeah. The women came out with tambourines and musical instruments. Verse 7, they danced, and they sang, "Saul has slain his thousands, David his ten thousands." The song was spreading everywhere. I mean it was the top ten, week after week after week.

*I can imagine how this goes, "Saul has slain his thousands." Then, you know, a pause, a little musical **selah**.*

*Saul is so excited because he actually did not do that. It was a little exaggerated; the numbers were not usually that big. He was thinking, "Well, one **is** effective if he has been in the military as long as I have. I guess I do tend to be amazing." They are kind of exaggerating, but he is not very troubled by it. He is pretty happy. This is how I picture it.*

*Then the musical **selah** is over, and they sing, "David is ten times more effective than you." Saul is in his sixties; David is in his early twenties. "The young guy is ten times more effective than you are of bringing deliverance and bringing security to our nation."*

Verse 8, Saul was very angry. Now he loved David in 1 Samuel 16-17. He loved David as David would come periodically to the king's court in Gibeah from Bethlehem and play the music when Saul would have this spirit of depression and oppression come on him. He grew to love David. However, his love turned to anger very quickly. The song, the saying, displeased him. He said, "Whoa, they are ascribing to David ten times more effectiveness, ten times more ability, ten times more impact than I have!"

The real answer should be, “So?” The nation got saved, the nations got blessed, so what? Who cares who has the biggest numbers when the kingdom is getting built and people are getting touched by God. They are loving God, and they are getting delivered. Who cares who has the biggest meeting if it is happening?

King Saul took a step back and became very suspicious. He thought, “What more can he have now but the kingdom?” In other words, to be the king, to be, to sit on the throne; that is what he means by he can have the kingdom. He can have the senior role as the top authority in the kingdom and replace me.

Verse 9, “From that day forward Saul eyed David.” He looked at him with suspicion is the idea. Now this is a critical moment in Saul’s life, verse 8. It is a critical moment in your life and my life. When Saul eyed him, that was jealousy, suspicion. When that touched him and what Saul did with that, well, his future was in the balance based on what he did with that emotion.

If you have that emotion, and you call it what it is, and you say, “Lord, I have jealousy in my heart,” the Lord says, “That is okay. Let’s talk about it. Let’s move forward. Let’s renounce it. Let’s move in the opposite spirit.” If that seed does not get dealt with, it will grow and dominate us. It will dominate Saul’s life.

I remember when I was a young pastor, and I was teaching on the life of David. I was in St. Louis. My wife Diane and I were there for about seven years, pastoring. I was in my early twenties. A guy right down the road started a church. In just a year it was 1,000 or 2000 people. I mean it exploded! It was the fastest growing church in the city. A number of the people from my little church of 300 or 400 people were going and joining his church I was about twenty-two or twenty-three years old, something like that, teaching the life of David and I had a little church plant, a young adult church. So you know I thought, “Wow! That is kind of interesting.” A number of young couples from my church went and joined it. So I went just to sit there to see what was going on. I had negative emotions. I had jealousies and fears. What if my whole congregation just comes to nothing? So I went there and heard the guy. I heard some things in the congregation that were just clearly not right. Some of the things being said were not biblical. But the church was growing, and people were getting healed and saved.

So some things there were not right, and in the natural I thought, “What a bummer!” But I was teaching the life of David every week, so I was facing every one of these lessons.

The Lord said to me, “You need to act in the opposite spirit.”

I said, “Lord, I will do anything, as long as it is easy.”

The Lord whispered in my heart, “I want you to go there every week and take notes and learn from him.”

“Lord, I am really busy, and I got a lot going on here.”

“Go, do it. Go learn from him.”

So I went down there and the people from my church were all excited. “Mike, you are finally getting it! You are getting it.” It was just torturing my flesh because I could see clearly some key things being said that were wrong. Even later on that church acknowledged it and disavowed them. The Lord just wanted it that way. So I went there for some months, maybe for nearly a year it seems like. I mean I think it was six, eight, nine months, something like that. I do not know.

Then next was the double death, double death. The Lord said to tithe to this church. That is, a second tithe. He said to give my first tithe to my church which I did as the pastor, then give another tithe to this church. I did not have any money. He said to give it to them. “No, Lord, he is saying wrong things.”

“Just do it.” I hated it.

But we became dear friends, that pastor and I, and phenomenal things happened. We are dear friends to this day. This is thirty-five, almost forty years later. Glorious things happened. I looked back and I am so grateful for this chapter right here and for 1 Samuel 19-20 as well because that is what the Lord was saying. He said, “I do not want you to go that direction. If you do not deal with this right now...” not that it will be over forever, but that was it. Boy, operating in the opposite spirit was a tearing of my flesh.

Many pastors in the city were criticizing him because he said some things that were not biblical, and a lot of people were joining his church. The Lord said, “In the pastor circles in the city, you only bless him.”

They would say, “Well, you know he did say this...”

I would think, “It was worse than that!” I don’t really remember all the details of it.

I know this, that He said, “Bless, only bless. Give him your money, go to his meetings, bless him, and your heart will get liberated.” We ended up with a tremendous friendship, and again that is a story for another day.

*I want you to look at this chapter and understand, “Okay, this is real. I am not only going to be a David; I am **not** going to be a Saul.” There are two ways to read this story.*

- B. **Very angry:** Saul interpreted the song in negative way. He was very angry, saying, “They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed only thousands.”
- C. **Jealous:** Saul was jealous of David, in contrast to Jonathan’s affection and the people’s love for him. The seeds of jealousy in Saul’s soul ripened and grew into a plan to murder David. The spirit of jealousy distorts our thinking. It can dominate our lives if we allow it to grow. The way to overcome this is by a ruthless honesty before God that confesses and repents of it.
- D. **Saul eyed David:** Saul watched David with a suspicious eye. He was paranoid. Samuel had told Saul that he would be replaced. Saul had been looking for any who might be his successor. Saul connected the women’s song with Samuel’s prophecy of Saul’s “neighbor,” to whom the Lord had given the kingdom (15:28).
- E. **What more could he have but the kingdom?** It dawned on Saul that David was the one whom God had called to replace him (18:8). God set up this situation by sending Samuel to inform Saul that one day a man would be raised up to replace him. This created suspicion in Saul toward others.

V. SAUL ATTEMPTED TO KILL DAVID (1 SAM. 18:10-13)

- A. Saul was oppressed by a demonic spirit, resulting in his first act of violence toward David (18:10-11). Saul’s anger and jealousy opened the door for increased demonic activity in his mind and emotions. Giving way to jealousy gives Satan opportunity even in a believer’s life (Eph. 4:26, 27).

¹⁰It happened on the next day that the distressing spirit from God came upon Saul...David played music with his hand...there was a spear in Saul’s hand. ¹¹Saul cast the spear, for he said, “I will pin David to the wall!” But David escaped his presence twice. (1 Sam. 18:10-11)

Well it happened the very next day that the distressing spirit from the Lord came upon Saul. We found this first in 1 Samuel 16; now it appears again in 1 Samuel 18 and again in 1 Samuel 19. This oppression, this dark cloud of demonic activity mixed with Saul’s bad choices at the heart level, would connect. I mean yielding to jealousy,

walking it out, and then demons helping you with it—that kind of combination is deadly and it is really real, even in the lives of believers. That jealousy, that negativity, gets entrenched and it grows.

So the next day a distressing spirit from God came upon Saul. Now David was in the king's court. He was playing music with his hand, but there was a spear in Saul's hand. This thing overtook Saul. This was the very first act of violence right here. So far Saul had been fearful, and he had this dark emotion of jealousy and all this fantasy and a mad, vain imagination about it. He had never acted out in an act of violence. Here it is, boom! I tell you that here, if he does not move in the opposite of the spirit of this now, he is going to get totally captured by it.

We no longer throw physical spears because you go to jail if you do that. What we do is throw verbal spears. They are just as dangerous to our hearts as the physical spears. We speak things that undermine the person who is troubling us.

Verse 11, "He cast the spear, for he said, 'I will pin him to the wall.'" Do you know how you pin a man to the wall with a spear? It goes through him! Pin him to the wall? That means you are impaled. I mean, Saul, that is bad. David escaped. In fact, it happened two times. The reason it happened was because whenever David was promoted, Saul's fear and jealousy was stirred up, and then the demonic activity combined with that fear and jealousy. They got combined together, and then acts of violence and the demonic activity multiplied. If you give expression to it, it multiplies. If you act in the opposite spirit with repentance, it diminishes.

- B. **Saul cast a spear:** This was his first overt act of violence. David did not pick up the spear and throw it back at Saul physically, or verbally, but quietly left. Attempted murder was a sure sign that the darkness in Saul's life was setting in. On a later occasion Saul again threw a spear at David (19:10).
- C. Saul removed David from his position in the royal court and demoted him to a position in the army, hoping that David would be killed in battle (18:12-13).

¹²Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, but had departed from Saul.

¹³Therefore Saul removed him from his presence, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people. (1 Sam. 18:12-13)

Saul was afraid of David because he knew that the Lord was with him, so then Saul removed David out of the royal court. He fired him. "David, you are fired, not just from playing music but also from your sitting at the table at the court in a leadership position." Saul said, "I am going to make you a captain of thousand," meaning this is a different role. It sounds like it is the same thing as being over the army. No, he put David into battles where he had to expose himself to harm all the time. In other words, Saul wanted the Philistines to kill him. So he kicked him out, fired him from his job at the royal court, and gave him an assignment that was nearly guaranteed one day to get David get killed in his youth.

Now it is interesting that when Saul threw the spear at him, David should have been the one who became afraid, but Saul was the one who became afraid; it was the opposite. Saul threw the spear, and Saul got afraid, but David had confidence, because Saul understood that when he threw that spear—he did it on two different occasions—for David to avoid it meant that God was with him. So Saul actually became afraid, instead of David becoming afraid. Thus he gave him a job in the military that would expose him to far more risky, dangerous military situations.

- D. **The Lord was with David:** The evidence of the Lord's favor and presence were on David's life.

- E. **The Lord departed from Saul:** Saul's character gradually deteriorated. He went from being a national hero to a fearful, jealous, and depressed man, and then became an angry, murderous tyrant.
- F. **Afraid:** When Saul saw David's success, his fear that David might replace him as king increased (18:12, 15). Instead of being grateful to David because of his helpful service, Saul was afraid of him. He once loved David greatly (16:21), but now it turned to hatred. The spear episode incited fear—not in David, but in Saul. Saul reasoned that the only way that David was able to evade his spear at such close range was that “the LORD was with David but had left Saul” (18:12).
- G. **Saul removed David:** Saul wanted David out of royal court where he was gaining more favor. Saul did not repent; instead he fired David from his prestigious job in the royal court.
- H. **Made him captain:** Saul wanted David to be exposed to the danger of battle against the Philistines. David was sent from the protection of the court to lead the troops in battle. This new position posed risks for David's reputation and well-being. If he was not successful on the battlefield, it would reduce his prestige and popularity and maybe even end his life. David's God-given success in these military campaigns caused Saul to have more fear and David to have more favor in the nation.
- I. **Leadership lesson:** We are to have patient confidence in God if removed from our position in an unjust way, knowing that the Lord can bless us just as He blessed David in his new role.
- J. **Going out and coming in:** This speaks of functioning in leadership as a shepherd who helped God's people overcome the enemies of God's will in their life (Num. 27:17; 1 Sam. 8:20; 2 Sam. 5:24). It included the idea that David lived his life openly before them without pretense and hypocrisy.
- K. David's noble character, successful leadership, and popularity caused Saul to fear him (18:14-16)
¹⁴And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the LORD was with him. ¹⁵Therefore, when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him. ¹⁶But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them. (1 Sam. 18:14-16)

VI. SAUL OFFERED HIS DAUGHTER MERAB TO DAVID (1 SAM. 18:17-19)

- A. Saul offered his daughter Merab to David in marriage, but then gave her to another man in marriage that very day (18:17-19). This was meant to be a public (national) insult of David to stir up mutiny in his heart against the king. The political implications of this marriage included giving David status as the king's son-in-law and as part of the royal family.
*¹⁷Saul said to David, “Here is my older daughter Merab; I will give her to you as a wife. Only be valiant for me, and fight the LORD's battles.” For Saul thought, “Let my hand not be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him.”¹⁸So David said to Saul, “Who am I, and what is my life or my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?”
¹⁹But it happened at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to Adriel the Meholathite as a wife. (1 Sam. 18:17-19)*

Saul did not kill him, so Saul kicked into a different strategy, a deceptive strategy. He thought, “I know what I will do. I will give him my daughter.” When a king gives his daughter, the dowry for a daughter, the bride price,

would be great. The groom's family would have to give a lot of money. For a king's daughter, you would have to give like a million dollars, not really, but I mean a big number.

David was a poor shepherd boy. He did not have money for that. The other context is this: remember before David fought Goliath back in 1 Samuel 17, in the chapter before, the offer was made by the king, "Whoever kills the giant, I will give him my daughter" and there will not be any dowry was the idea. "As a matter of fact, you will be exempt from taxes, I mean you will join the royal family." The idea of marrying the king's daughter meant you are in the royal family, which meant David would have a far greater claim on the throne as a member of the royal family. That is not good if you are a jealous king, because David would not be just a servant in the court. He would be in the family so he would be in line somewhat. I mean not exactly, but he would at least have an argument.

Verse 17, so Saul said to David, "Okay, here is my older daughter." Merab was her name. He said, "You can have Merab, my older daughter, the one of whom I said that whoever defeated Goliath I will give her to you as my wife. Here is the deal; there is going to be a dowry. What you are going to do is you are going to have to go kill some Philistines because I know you have no money, David. I am a king, and it will cost you a lot of money to pay the dowry. So I tell you what, instead of money, do some service for the Lord: go kill some Philistines."

David could have said, "Now wait a second! Your daughter was promised to me without doing this, and you are risking my life, and you just fired me from my job."

Saul would have said, "Yeah, that is right." Saul lied about his daughter because he had said she is yours and now she is not unless you pay a deal. Saul is now risking David's life.

David's answer was, "Who am I, a lowly man like me, to have this privilege?"

Like, David, let me read you your rights. This guy is lying to you, putting you in a dangerous position, taking advantage of you, and he just fired you.

David responded with such humility. We have a little bit more on that in the notes. Verse 19, it happens the same day, after David said this, that Saul gave Merab to someone else.

So David said, "Yes, yes, I will go kill the Philistines. I will risk my life, yes. I see the beauty and the honor of being in the royal family of the nation that is in covenant with God. How could a guy like me be in the royal family of the covenant nation with God? Oh my goodness, yes, yes! Lord, You are giving me such a better deal than I deserve." Because mostly we think we are getting a bad deal and that is where offense comes in. David said, "No, I know what is going on. The God of Israel, wow, I do not deserve this!"

But Saul took that daughter, Merab, and gave her to Adriel. He said, "Oh, by the way David, I am just changing my mind. I am giving my daughter to another man today." He was trying to incite David.

This is one of the things he was doing to get David offended and get David stirred up with mutiny in his heart to say, "Wait, this is too much! You lied about it on the front end. You sent me out into military risk so that I could die. You fired me from my job. Now you take the woman from me. You have insulted me nationally because everybody knows it. Now you have set me up and taken it away." But David did not respond like that at all.

- B. **Who am I:** David responded in humility to the honor of being in the royal family. He responded in gratitude, not anger. He could have said, I am the one Samuel anointed, the one who killed Goliath to save the nation, and the one who is loved by so many in Israel. Instead he asked, what is my life (rank in life), or my father's family, being a simple shepherd with Moabite blood (Ruth 4:13-17)?

VII. DAVID MARRIED MICHAL (1 SAM. 18:20-27)

- A. Saul offered him marriage to his youngest daughter Michal as another deceitful scheme (18:20-27) to kill David indirectly by demanding an outrageously high dowry for her—that he kill 100 Philistines. The offer of marriage to Michal was Saul’s third means of seeking to kill David.

²⁰*Michal, Saul’s daughter, loved David. They told Saul, and the thing pleased him.* ²¹*Saul said, “I will give her to him, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.” Therefore Saul said to David a second time, “You shall be my son-in-law today.”* ²²*Saul commanded his servants, “Communicate with David secretly, and say, ‘Look, the king has delight in you...therefore, become the king’s son-in-law’”...* ²³*David said, “Does it seem to you a light thing to be a king’s son-in-law, seeing I am a poor and lightly esteemed man?”...* ²⁵*Saul said, “Thus you shall say to David: ‘The king does not desire any dowry but one hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take vengeance on the king’s enemies.’” But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines...* ²⁶*it pleased David well to become the king’s son-in-law...* ²⁷*David arose and went, he and his men, and killed two hundred men of the Philistines.* (1 Sam. 18:20-27)

We will read through this really quickly and bring this to an end here. Verse 20, the younger daughter Michal, said, “Hey Dad, I like David.”

Saul was really thinking, “I am trying to insult him by the whole nation knowing he is supposed to be married to my oldest daughter and then taking her away. I am trying to incite him to get him stirred up so I have a reason to be against him.

Michal says, “But I really like him.”

Saul thinks, “That is good.” because in verse 21 Saul says, “I know this girl; she is trouble. She will be a snare. She will cause him trouble.” He thinks, “Perfect, since David is so humble and enthusiastic, I am going to have him kill 100 Philistines as his dowry. He has to kill a hundred.” So he called David in and said, “It is 100.”

“Well, Father Saul, a couple of hours ago that number was not quite so big. That is a pretty extreme number. Kill 100 men for your daughter?”

“Yeah,” he said, “Yeah.”

So David went out and killed 200. He doubled it, came back right away and said, “Here you go.”

Saul was very upset. In verse 23 David said the same thing about the younger daughter Michal as he did about Merab the older daughter. He said in verse 23, “It is not a small thing to me that I could be in the royal family. I am a poor peasant boy from Bethlehem. I know I got fired, just got insulted by you taking away your oldest daughter. You have been trying to incite me. You are trying to get me killed by the Philistines. You fired me from my job. I get all of that. You know what? God is God and He loves me. I love Him. I am in His hands. I will give you double what you want.” What an amazing heart!

- B. **Dowry:** David was a poor man and, therefore, unable to pay the bride price for a princess; only a wealthy man could afford to pay the high dowry price that a king’s daughter would require. Saul set the price in the form of service instead of money, requiring David to engage in dangerous military exploits with the hope that the Philistines would kill him.

- C. **Humility:** To both marriage offers David responded with humility (18:18, 23). David did not think that he deserved the privileges and honor that he received from God and people. His humility was expressed in truly believing that he was not worthy to be a part of the royal family in the nation that was in covenant with the Lord. He understood Israel's role in God's eyes.
- D. **Gratitude:** David refused to be offended, but responded in gratitude, not anger, at being put in a position that required him to risk his life and at having been publically insulted by Saul refusing to give him his first daughter in marriage. Again, David could have said, "I am the one Samuel anointed and who killed Goliath to save the nation, etc." But David did not give any signs that he thought that Saul's demands for this dowry were either dangerous or demeaning.

²³***David said, "Does it seem to you a light thing to be a king's son-in-law, seeing I am a poor and lightly esteemed man?" (1 Sam. 18:23)***

Gratitude marked David. He refused to be offended.

- E. When being passed over for promotion, it seems natural and reasonable to insist on being honored and to think that we deserve more honor than we received. However, these are gifts of God that no one deserves in reality, so we should hold them lightly, not think that we deserve them. That is the foundation of humility. Someone who walks in humility does not feel that they deserve more honor.

³***I say...to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. (Rom. 12:3)***

Let's talk about humility. There are a couple of sentences here. Paul the apostle said, "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought." Now concerning who we are in God you cannot think high enough. I mean you are heirs, coheirs with Christ. I mean you are heirs, part of the family of God. Concerning who you are in Christ you cannot think high enough; it is higher than what you think. But in the way that we interact and interface with people we are to not assume we should have more honor, or that we deserve more than they do because we are more gifted, we have been more loyal, though that might always be true.

God would say, "I have already given you a lot better deal than you deserve. You have eternal life. You will have a resurrected body. You are part of the eternal family. You have the Holy Spirit. You are already way better off, fully forgiven of everything. You got a way better deal than you ever deserve, no matter if they give you the promotion or not." That is how David viewed it.

We are not to think more highly of ourselves in terms of our relationships to others. For example, thinking, "I should have that role instead of you." We should think, "You know what? God, I am so grateful for who I am with You. I just thank You. Whatever You give me it is more than I deserve in terms of natural promotion and honor." It is more than any of us deserve, whatever place we have.

You might say, "Well, I do not have any place." Beloved, you have breath and life and you are in the kingdom. That is more than you deserve. You are already way ahead of the game. If nobody ever gives you anything you are way ahead of the game in terms of what you deserve. I am way ahead of the game in terms of what I deserve.

- F. Saul's fear of David increased because he knew the Lord and the people favored David (18:28-30).

²⁸***Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal...loved him; ²⁹and Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul became David's enemy continually. ³⁰Then the princes of the Philistines went out to war. And so it was, whenever they went out, that David behaved more wisely than all the servants of Saul, so that his name became highly esteemed.*** (1 Sam. 18:28-30)

We will just read this and then I will pray over you. Saul, Saul what happened? David came back with 200 lives. Saul thought, “Oh no! The Lord is with that kid. Everything he does goes well. He is generous. He is humble. He has got gratitude. He will not get offended. He will not strike back. He will not throw a spear back, not even verbally.” So, verse 28, the king was far more afraid now. He thought, “I cannot conquer a guy like this. I do not know what to do with a guy who cannot be bought or sold. I don’t know what to do with you because you are not moved by privilege and you are not offended by the lack of it. I do not know what to do with a guy who cannot be bought or sold by advantages or promotions.”

Saul became David’s enemy continually. This thing became established in him. Saul would not operate in the opposite spirit of jealousy, so the jealousy grew. His most beneficial associate, David, became his number one enemy. He was the one who blessed Saul the most. He brought blessing and finances, security and wealth to the kingdom by the military victories, etc.

Verse 30, now the Philistines got all stirred up. You know why they got stirred up in verse 30? Because David had just raided and killed 200 of their men, simply because Saul was being mean to David. The Philistines said, “Hey, we are coming back after that kid! We are going to make you pay for those lives.” So it created a war. Of course the war was off and on all the time, but it stirred it back up.

- G. **Enemy continually:** Saul was a confirmed enemy of David for the rest of his days (18:29). Saul became his enemy continually, which eventually led him to seek to kill David directly (19:1).
- H. **Highly esteemed:** David’s actions and attitude resulted in his name being esteemed, the opposite of what Saul wanted to happen. It backfired on Saul. David was not killed by the Philistines, but rather gained more honor in the nation, even as Saul sought to destroy his life and honor. God overruled the anger of Saul and the Philistines, causing it to contribute to God’s plan for David.

¹⁰Surely the wrath of man shall praise You [God overrules it to fulfill His purpose]. (Ps. 76:10)

- I. **Behaved wisely:** David behaved wisely and was successful in promotion and adversity. Behaving wisely included being more successful than any of Saul’s other officers. He did not take advantage of his position in any way. He did not bully, manipulate, or promote himself in his new position or use information to which he had access for his benefit. He did not threaten people who did not embrace what he wanted. David did not tell others how badly Saul was treating him. He acted wisely in holding his speech (16:18 prudent of speech). David had many stories against Saul, but did not use them to undermine him. Saul broke his promises to him, but David did not speak of this to others.

Whenever David went out to fight them, he behaved even more wisely than all of Saul’s other workers. Meaning he prospered and he made wise choices. The way he responded to people: he did not bully people; he did not manipulate people; he was still a servant; he had a gracious heart; he did not pay people back. He behaved wisely in promotion. His name was highly esteemed.

- J. **Leadership lesson:** David was not going to die until he had completed God’s plan for his life. We cannot die until we complete the will of God in our lives.

Amen, let’s stand.

Lord, we want to be like David. Lord, at age twenty, age sixty, age eighty, we want to be like David. We want to understand this chapter and we want to go in that direction, Lord.

Just for a moment talk to Him. Say, “Lord, I am going to do this. This is where I am going.”

Now you are not going to get it here in one time. Most of you have read this story a few times. Get familiar with this story. Just read it over and over and put yourself in the story.

Lord, we thank You for this glorious portrait of what it means to be a leader after Your own heart, in Jesus' name. Amen and amen.