

David: Responding to Mistreatment (Ps. 31:5; 1 Sam. 24; 26)

I. APPROACHING MISTREATMENT AND PERSONAL CONFLICT IN A GODLY WAY

- A. One of the most important aspects of our spiritual life is how we respond when mistreated. Being mistreated is something that all of us experience many times throughout our entire life. Some hope in vain to get to a place in our lives where being mistreated is rare.
- B. If we respond in the right way, then we will go deeper in God. If we respond wrongly, a residue of bitterness will build up in us over time resulting in a dull and defiled spirit.
- C. Foundational principle: We are not our own because Jesus bought us and now owns us. Therefore, He is responsible for us. He owns our relationships, money, reputation, physical well-being, ministry position and impact, etc. Therefore, He is responsible to be our source in these areas.
¹⁹ You are not your own...²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Cor. 6:19-20)
- D. Often believers love Jesus, but keep these issues in their own hands and control, instead of ***transferring the rights to what they deserve*** into His hands.
- E. David is one of the premier examples of how to respond rightly when mistreated. This was one of the strongest aspects of his spiritual life. Ps. 31 is the classic psalms of how David interacted with the Lord when he was mistreated. It gives us insight into how David responded when mistreated.
- F. To commit our spirit into God's hands is to commit the most important issues of our life to Him. Doing this was one of David's primary values throughout his life. By doing this, David brought God into the conflict. This was part of David's spiritual warfare when he was in a personal conflict.
⁵ Into Your hand I commit my spirit...¹⁵ My times are in Your hand... (Ps. 31:5, 15)
- G. "My spirit" refers to everything that deeply touches his spirit such as his relationships, reputation, money, physical well-being, ministry position and impact. To commit them into God's hands is to make ***deep heart transactions with God*** to give them over to God's leadership. Because my relationships, money, reputation, etc. are His, therefore, ***He is responsible for them***.
- H. This involves continually transferring our personal rights into His hands with His promise to take responsibility for them. Since all our money is committed to Him, if someone steals it then they are stealing money from Him. He is responsible to get the money back.
- I. We commit all to His ownership and He commits to take responsibility for it. David trusted God to intervene to establish His will (agenda), in His way and in His timing. God will often answer the conflict in a different way and timing than we would. To commit our spirit into His hands is to embrace whatever God does in the situation.

- J. In the most dramatic crisis in Jesus' life, He quoted one of David's primary life values. When Jesus committed His spirit into God's hands, it referred to much more than going to heaven.
⁴⁶ ***He said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." (Lk. 23:46)***
- K. Peter elaborated on what this meant for Jesus to commit His spirit into God's hands.
³ ***When He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously... (1 Pet. 2:23)***
1. To believe God to judge means to believe that He will intervene to make wrong things right in His way and in His own timing.
 2. To be reviled means to be insulted or spoken to in a demeaning or sarcastic way. This is a form of mistreatment. Our natural response is to reply to them in the same demeaning spirit. Some neglect to commit into God's hands the "small issues" such as being reviled.
- L. We must make room for God's vengeance by refusing to take our own.
¹⁹ ***Do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. 20 Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink...21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Rom. 12:19-21)***
1. The idea of vengeance includes receiving the justice that "sets the record straight" and receiving that which is rightfully is due. It involves more than just an extreme payback that some associate with the word vengeance. We give place to wrath or God's intervention.
 2. We have two options, to establish our own justice and vengeance or trust God to do it.
 3. If we take vengeance into our hands, then He will draw back and allow us to do it without intervening for us. Many believers take their own vengeance by setting the record straight about themselves and making sure that they get what is rightfully theirs. ***The domain of vengeance (payback) belongs only to God.*** He has more love, wisdom and power to intervene in the best way.
 4. Taking vengeance ourselves is a ***cruel task master***. It keeps us from connecting with God in a sustained way because of the "emotional traffic" of being so preoccupied with establishing our own vengeance. If we make room for the wrath of God, then He will intervene and give us much more in His timing and will also transform our hearts in the process.
- M. Every time we are mistreated it is an occasion for promotion in God for your heart to go deeper and to receive more from God in our external circumstances. ***Set your heart to not waste one good trial.*** I want the full impact in my spirit. I want to go deep in God and I want Jesus to intervene to give me the ***full measure*** of what He intends to give me. I want the full internal transformation and the full external intervention.

II. DAVID AND SAUL

- A. Two classic chapters in David's training in the "seminary of Saul" are 1 Sam. 24, in the wilderness of Engedi and 1 Sam. 26, in the wilderness of Ziph. They happen several months apart and each has the same message. Each time David catches Saul asleep, so that David could do whatever he wanted to Saul. God was testing David's heart. This is a "divine pop quiz" that David did not see coming.
- B. The primary dream of David's heart was to connect deeply with God. His secondary dream concerned his calling as king of Israel. Often the primary dream of our heart is related to seeking blessed circumstances.
- C. "Divine pop quizzes" give us opportunities to re-align our heart in order to shift secondary things to their proper place. They let us work our "faith muscle" so that we put the primary dream first.
- D. If you want to be like David and are called with a calling like David, then you will surely be enrolled in the "seminary of Saul".
- E. King Saul was king of Israel and insanely jealous of David. He was literally insane with jealousy. He had the most intense love-hate relationship with David and he decided to kill David. He knew that David was going to replace him one day.
- F. Saul is David's father-in-law, boss, law enforcer and president of the nation. This mistreatment involves David's family, occupation, nation, and even his legal status in society.

III. DAVID AND SAUL AT THE WILDERNESS OF ENGEDI (1 SAM. 24)

- A. David finds Saul sleeping in a cave.
¹ When Saul had returned from following the Philistines...it was told him, saying, "Take note! David is in the Wilderness of En Gedi." ² Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel, and went to seek David...³ He (Saul) came to...a cave; and Saul went in to attend to his needs. David and his men were staying in the recesses of the cave. (1 Sam. 24:1-3)
- B. David stopped his men from harming Saul. We are to walk out this principle in all relationships, not just with those in leadership.
⁴ The men of David said, "This is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, that you may do to him as it seems good to you.'" David arose and secretly cut off a corner of Saul's robe...⁶ He said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to...the Lord's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him..." ⁷ David restrained his servants with these words, and did not allow them to rise against Saul. (1 Sam. 24:4-7)

- C. David temporarily convinces Saul that he does not seek to harm him.

⁸ *David also arose afterward, went out of the cave...called out to Saul, saying..." 10 This day your eyes have seen that the LORD delivered you today into my hand in the cave...I said, 'I will not stretch out my hand against my lord.'...11 "See the corner of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe, and did not kill you, know and see that there is neither evil nor rebellion in my hand...Yet you hunt my life to take it. (1 Sam. 24:8-11)*

- D. David commits his cause into God's hands.

¹² *Let the LORD judge between you and me, and let the LORD avenge me on you. But my hand shall not be against you...15 Therefore let the LORD be judge, and judge between you and me, and see and plead my case, and deliver me out of your hand." (1 Sam. 24:12-15)*

IV. DAVID AND SAUL AT THE WILDERNESS OF ZIPH (1 SAM. 26)

- A. Saul continues to pursue David with 3,000 men.

² *Saul...went down to the Wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David...7 There Saul lay sleeping within the camp, with his spear stuck in the ground by his head....8 Abishai said to David, "God has delivered your enemy into your hand this day. Now therefore, please, let me strike him at once with the spear. (1 Sam. 26:2-8)*

- B. David refused to kill Saul. God caused a sleep to come on them to test David's heart.

⁹ *David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him; for who can stretch out his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless?" 10 David said, "...The LORD shall strike him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall go out to battle and perish...11 But please, take now the spear and the jug of water that are by his head, and let us go." 12 They got away...for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the LORD had fallen on them. (1 Sam. 26:9-12)*

- C. David rebuked Abner, the captain of Saul's army for not protecting Saul.

¹³ *David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of a hill afar off...15 David said to Abner, "...Why then have you not guarded your lord the king?...now see where the king's spear is, and the jug of water that was by his head." 17 Saul knew David's voice, and said, "Is that your voice, my son David?" (1 Sam. 26:13-17)*

- D. David committed his cause into God's hands again.

²¹ *Saul said, "I have sinned. Return, my son David. For I will harm you no more..." 22 David answered and said, "...23 May the LORD repay every man...for the LORD delivered you into my hand today, but I would not stretch out my hand against the LORD's anointed...24 so let Him deliver me out of all tribulation." 25 Then Saul said to David, "May you be blessed, my son David! You shall both do great things and also still prevail." (1 Sam. 26:21-25)*

- E. Several years later, Saul died in battle (1 Sam. 31; 1 Chron. 10:12-14).

¹³ *Saul died for his unfaithfulness...14 Therefore He killed him, and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse. (1 Chron. 10:13-14)*