

Session 2 David's Training: 3 Anointings, 3 Stages, and 5 Seasons

I. REVIEW: DAVID AS A MAN AFTER GOD'S HEART

The title of this session is a little different than on the syllabus list of all the classes that we are going to do. I am going to change them a little bit, so every now and then they will be a little different from what you were told. We will be studying the overview of David's training. We are going to look at the three times that David was publicly anointed in an official public way. Then we are going to look at three stages of his calling and training and five seasons represented by five cities in the life of David, because these all apply to God raising up leaders after His own heart.

- A. The first description of David that the Lord gave through Samuel to King Saul (1 Sam. 13:14):

¹⁴The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be commander [leader] over His people. (1 Sam. 13:14)

We will be very brief on this here, but keep in mind that this is the very first description that God gave of David: a man after His own heart. That is what God said about this young boy—maybe twelve or thirteen years old at time; we are not sure—a man after God's own heart. That means he was committed to obey the commands of God's heart, to study the emotions of God's heart, and to contend for the purpose of God's heart above everything.

1. David obeyed the **commands** of God's heart: He set his heart to obey even after his failures.
2. David studied the **emotions** of God's heart: He focused on understanding God's emotions.
3. David served the **purpose** of God's heart: He sought God's fullness for his life and generation.

- B. David was a student of God's beauty—His glory (splendor), heart (emotions), wisdom, power, etc.

⁴One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple. (Ps. 27:4)

Again, David was a student of God's beauty. He looked at the beauty of God in God's heart. The way that David saw himself was through the lens of the beauty of God; it was the way David saw others and the way he saw God's leadership in his circumstances.

- C. David found his primary identity (his sense of value and success) in who he was in his relationship with God. He measured his success in life by how much he grew in grace to walk in obedient love and meekness. David felt God's love for him and his love for God; therefore he felt successful, even when circumstances were difficult, even when his calling to be king was threatened.

This is again a repeat from the last session. David's primary identity was established in who he was in his relationship with God. That is true of all of us, but it is not a natural thing. It is something we cultivate. It is something that we develop and we are intentional about it, because our natural way is to see our value and our identity or define success by how much we are appreciated or applauded in the eyes of people and how much

influence we have with them. I think those things are important things, but they do not define who we are; they are not the primary sense of our identity.

- D. Our relationship with the Lord consists of who we are before God as “one loved by God” and as “one who loves God” in response. Our love for God must be expressed in obedience to Him.

When I talk about David having his identity in his relationship with God, that consists of who David was before God. There are two dimensions: as one whom God loves and one who loves God. So there are these two dimensions. He loves us, we love Him, and those are the two dimensions of our relationship with Him.

- E. There are two aspects of our confidence in God's love: first, our confidence in God's affection for us even in our weakness; second, our genuine love for God even when it is weak. Weak love is still sincere love. David's *confidence in God's love* was about being confident in God's affection for him in his weakness, but it did not lead to his being content to live in compromise. God disciplined David for his sin several times, but it did not change God's tender affection for David (Prov. 3:12).

We talk in the life of David about confidence in God's love, but all through any messages related to the grace of God or God's heart, our desire is to see people confident in love. That is a phrase we have used for many years at IHOPKC: being confident in love. That means two things related to the way we relate to God. Number one, we are confident that He has affection for us even in our weakness. Beloved, when we have confidence in that, and it is not like there is a magic moment where suddenly we do, but that is something we grow in, and the devil attacks it, then we grow in it, we confess it, we speak the Word, we meditate on it, we declare it to God that He actually has affection, He enjoys us even in our weakness—I am talking about sincere believers in their weakness.

There is a second dimension to having confidence in love. This is confidence that our love is genuine, that He sees it as genuine even though our love for Him is weak. The devil tells us we are hopeless hypocrites, but it is not true. Though our love is weak, it is still genuine. Weak love is not false. We can enjoy God enjoying us giving ourselves to Him even while we are growing. It is not just something that once we are as mature as Paul the apostle, then finally we know that God enjoys the way we love Him. A brand-new believer can have that dimension in their heart.

When I talk about people being confident in love and confident in God's affection, I am not telling them to be content in compromise. Some people think, “Well, I am confident in love and God loves me, He enjoys me” but they are not repenting. This does not work in that kind of context. We are NOT content to live in compromise under the banner of confidence in love. That is a deception! That is a distortion of the truth. We are confident that He enjoys us while we are giving our heart to Him, stumbling but always signing back up to go wholehearted in obedience.

*Also know this— this will show up several times as important in David's life—that though God enjoys you and me that does not mean He does not discipline us. Some people have the idea that “since God enjoys me and I am confident in love there will be no discipline for my compromises.” The Bible makes it clear that God disciplines us **because** He delights in us, Proverbs 3:12.*

So, as we are studying the life of David, we are going to hit these themes over and over. I do not want a distorted view that confidence in love means we just continue in compromise. Like, “Hey! God loves us and enjoys us, this is amazing, and there are no consequences for continued compromise.” No! There are consequences; there is the discipline of the Lord because He loves us. He will break into circumstances and wake us up and get our attention because He loves us. It is called His rod, and it is real. The rod of God

operates within the perimeters of the love and the grace of God without any contradiction whatsoever. So it is not like, "Hey, He loves me, so let boys be boys. I will do what I want to do." No, no, this is about people who are sincere about living under His leadership.

II. DAVID WAS ANOINTED PUBLICLY THREE TIMES

- A. David was anointed on three occasions, receiving enabling grace for three different purposes. The anointing of the Spirit empowers us with God's grace to do God's will in each season of our life.

We are going to look at the three times when David was anointed publicly. I am not talking about three encounters where he felt the Spirit's presence. You may have many of those encounters, but this is an unusual thing. No one in the Bible was anointed in three different settings in a public way. Each occasion had a different purpose in that season of David's life. I believe that we can find application of it for us, though we probably will not have a public anointing like this. However, there are principles that we can discern and identify from these three different times he was anointed.

1. First, David was anointed in **Bethlehem** (1 Sam. 16:13). God's assignment to David was to do small tasks while developing his spiritual identity and meekness with a servant spirit.

First he was anointed in Bethlehem, though the assignment of God for him when David was in Bethlehem was to do small tasks, to be faithful doing small things. We will look at this in more detail in a few minutes. He was not supposed to be king right then even though he was anointed to be king. He was developing his spiritual identity and his meekness. He was growing in meekness, faithfulness in small tasks, developing and being more established in his spiritual identity of seeing himself through the lens of his relationship with God, not through the lens of how other people applauded him or responded to him.

2. Second, David was anointed in **Hebron** (2 Sam. 2:4). God's assignment to David here was to govern God's people without losing his primary identity or his servant spirit.

Well, some years later, maybe thirteen, fourteen years later, when he was thirty, he was anointed in Hebron. He was in Hee-bron or Heh-bron, different ways that you might say it. When he was in Hebron he was anointed to govern God's people. He was anointed as king but over Judah, only one of the twelve tribes, only a twelfth of what God promised him. He was anointed to govern. This season was that he would govern but he would not lose his sense of his identity with God. He would not get his identity in being king. He would maintain his identity in his relationship with God while he was king over only one of the twelve tribes.

What happens so often is that God promises somebody a certain place of influence. In David's life we will call it being king but for others it might be a marketplace assignment, it may be a ministry role, whatever. God promises them a certain influence, a certain favor, impact, etc. Then they begin to get their identity from being king or from that place of favor. That is disaster! That is what the enemy wants to happen because he can destroy someone's life easily if they get their identity in their promises of blessing, in their public ministry or their public profile in the marketplace or wherever that public profile is.

3. Third, David was anointed in **Jerusalem** (2 Sam. 5:3). God's assignment to David here was to fully conquer God's enemies without losing his primary identity or servant spirit.

Number three, when he was thirty-seven—seven years after Hebron—he was anointed in Jerusalem. This was the time when he was going to fulfill all of the promise of God, in that season of his life from age thirty-seven to

seventy. That was the time where his assignment would come to completion and he would fully conquer all the enemies of God that he was assigned to conquer. He would fulfill the whole will of God is the idea.

B. Three stages in David's calling (Ps. 78:70-72)

⁷⁰He also chose David His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds; ⁷¹from following the ewes that had young He brought him, to shepherd Jacob His people...⁷²So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands. (Ps. 78:70-72)

Psalm 78 was written by Asaph. He was a singer in David's tabernacle, one of the chief singers, one of the main leaders, and he had a prophetic spirit on him as well. He wrote this about David towards the end of David's life or maybe afterwards. I do not know the exact timing, but I know it is towards the end or soon after David's life. Again, he was one of the leaders in the tabernacle of David, that worship ministry that David established in Jerusalem.

Here is what he wrote. Notice the three things he says verse 70. One, God chose David. Number two, God took David from the sheepfolds. Number three, God brought David to the throne; that is the idea of "to shepherd his people Israel." He shepherded them—here it is towards the end of David's life or soon after his life—"he shepherded them with integrity of heart." Asaph worked very closely with David, and he said, "I have watched him for these many years, and David does what he says." When no one was looking, David set his heart to obey God and to keep his commitments. That is integrity of heart. As king he guided the people with skillful hands. It was not just the anointing, but he actually cultivated his craft as king, all the skills related to that. There is an anointing, but there is a human side of cultivating the skills. There is work and labor and intentionality about doing that.

1. **Chose:** The Lord called David in his youth while he was living in Bethlehem.

Now notice he said the three words: number one he was chosen. There was a time in Bethlehem when he was first chosen, just in his teens.

2. **Took:** The Lord trained David in the wilderness years and while he was living in Hebron.

Then there was the season where God took him. He said, "I am taking you out of Bethlehem and I am putting you into my seminary course. Now you are under My direct leadership and I am attending to your training."

3. **Brought:** The Lord put David in position to fulfill the fullness of God's purpose in his life.

Then there is a time where God brought him or put him in Jerusalem on the throne. He was put there by God to walk out His purposes.

C. The threefold pattern seen in David's life calling and vision:

1. **Birthing of the vision:** At about 17 years old, David was given prophetic promises about his life when he received the initial call to be king of Israel. But he did not become king over all Israel until he was 37 years old, about twenty years later.

Here is the same principle said in other terminology. I have heard this three-fold pattern over the years said by various teachers; I am just borrowing it from a number of different guys whom I heard early in my ministry. That is, when God calls a man or a woman, there is the birthing of the vision where the prophetic word comes. It is exciting. God says, "Yea, I will do this through you and with you." You are so excited with the birthing of the vision; that is fun. Anticipation is high, excitement is new, and you are waiting, full of faith.

That happened to David; he was maybe seventeen. He was in Bethlehem, a very small, little town. Now notice that when God called him to be king over all of Israel, he was, let's say, age seventeen plus or minus a year or so, and he did not become king until he was thirty-seven. For twenty more years he was not yet king. Now I do not think that David at age seventeen thought, "Well, in twenty years..." I think David was thinking, "Wow, the great prophet Samuel came to my house and anointed me. I bet things pick up quickly!" They did, but then they took a sudden turn in the other direction. So the birthing of the vision is when the Lord calls, gives the prophetic words, and establishes that there is a great thing coming in your life.

2. **Death of the vision:** God tested and prepared David to equip him to walk out the fullness of God's vision for his life.

Then there is the death of the vision. Again these are terms that I have heard others use over the years. This is when God takes us into His seminary of life training. I do not mean just a season of learning the Bible, book learning, although I believe in that. That is why we have a Bible school, I believe in that. The season of training is not over when you know learning the fundamental principles of the Word of God.

The death of the vision is when the vision looks like it is never going to happen. It looks like the vision looks impossible. I mean when you first get the vision the prophetic words, you think, "Sure, why not? I mean, wow!" Then in this next season it is impossible in the natural. There is not a chance this is going to happen. It seems like all is lost. That happens many times in the season of training, and the vision looks so far away.

3. **Fullness of the vision:** God released greater favor, authority, and resources in David's life.

Then there is the fullness of the vision, the time when God said to David, "I brought you to shepherd My people." "I put you on the throne" is what that meant. There is the time when God puts you in the position where the fullness of the favor happens with the fullness of the authority and impact, the fullness of the resources in that season.

A lot of folks think it is step one—the birth—and step three—the fullness. They do not know there is a time where God takes you into His own hands, He takes you out of the familiar place in Bethlehem, and He takes you into uncharted territory into His own seminary of life. That is where again some use the term the death of the vision; it looks like the vision is never going to happen, and then it does. You look back over the years and God has established meekness and gratitude. He has realigned your thinking and your emotions and the way you view yourself, the way you view others.

III. FIVE SEASONS AND CITIES IN DAVID'S LIFE

Now we are going to look at the five seasons in David's life. Some of these dovetail together, these seasons and cities and stages of David's life. I identify each season with a city in David's life. Again I have heard others teach this and they apply it in different ways. These five cities are pretty prominent in his story when you study his life. I want you to know them on the front end so when we go through the class you can have this grid, a kind of road map, thinking, "Okay, I know where this storyline is going."

Now you may not be in just one season at one time; you might be in two of these seasons at one time. It is not like a mathematical equation where I am in this season and next month I am in the next season. It does not always work that way. The idea is that you can see the principles of God's leadership when He is raising up leaders like David, men or women, old or young.

- A. **Bethlehem:** The Bethlehem years lasted from his childhood through his teen years (1 Sam. 16-17). David's commitment to love God as the primary goal of his life was *tested by rejection and by being faithful in the mundane*. He found his identity in his relationship with God as he focused on understanding that God loved him and on cultivating his love for God. His sense of success was found in his relationship with God and in being faithful to God by being faithful in small things.

The Bethlehem years are David's childhood right up through his teens. This is when God first called him a man after His own heart. Back in 1 Samuel 13, again he is just a twelve or thirteen-year-old boy. Then in 1 Samuel 16 when he gets anointed, he is maybe seventeen or eighteen.

In the Bethlehem years David's commitment to love God is the primary goal of his life. I mean he is tending the sheep, and he has his guitar out there, his little harp. He is writing songs before God. He is not involved in a whole lot and I think is spending a lot of time alone. His goal of life, his primary goal, his identity is, "I love God, God loves me, and therefore I am successful. God loves me. I love God. My love is weak, but my love is real. God loves me. I love God. I am already successful whether I stay with the sheep or whether I go to the throne. My life is already successful in God's eyes."

Beloved, when it registers strongly that you are already successful in the ultimate sense, then you can approach circumstances with a whole lot less anxiety and stress. If you approach your assignment—in whatever assignment God gives you—if you approach it from a place that you are already successful, God loves you, you love God, then you are already successful in the ultimate sense. You have a whole lot less anxiety when all the disappointments and the delays and the mistreatment come. They come to everybody. Everybody has disappointments, mistreatment, and delays of the promises and provision; everybody does. If I feel successful, I face those very differently. If I think my success comes by being treated well and getting my promotion and getting the position, then I am just miserable all the time. The Lord is saying, "Align your heart with Me. There is so much going on in your life. You are a child of God, you are a son of the kingdom, you have eternal life, you are the Bride of Christ, your sins are forgiven, you will have a resurrected body, and the New Jerusalem is yours. Every cup of cold water you give is going to be remembered and rewarded forever. Come on see the big picture."

"I know, but they were mean to me in that meeting, and they fired me in that company, and I do not work there anymore."

The Lord says, "I know, but come on, there is so much more going on in your life."

"She broke up with me, and it is not worth it anymore."—Okay, that is not funny if she really did, you know. We just had our thirty-eighth wedding anniversary yesterday. So it is not like, "Oh, that is silly." No, that is real. I have got some stories! I am not going to tell them all to you, but that pain is real. Okay, let's get back to the Bible here, okay. I did not mean to trivialize that.

Well, David was tested in those early years by rejection. He was tested by having to be faithful in mundane, routine things. We imagine that we will get faithful—I am just talking about the natural mindset—when things really pick up. When things get big and exciting, then we will be faithful. The Lord says, "No, no! I want you faithful in the routine and mundane. I want you to keep your word—make commitments and do what you say—in your family, with the Lord, in the marketplace, at your school. If you say it, do it."

"Well, they did not catch it [hear it] when I said it."

No, no! Do it! Be faithful in your family life. Be faithful in your neighborhood, in the marketplace, at the university, in the ministry. The commitments you make on the team, you just be faithful with nobody chasing you down; that was what David was tested with in the Bethlehem years. He found his sense of success in his relationship to God.

1. David had to overcome the rejection of his family in this season (1 Sam. 16:7-11) and the rejection of his family and friends throughout his life (Ps. 38:11-12; 69:7-10).

¹⁰Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these."¹¹And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all the young men here?" Then he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep"...¹²He sent and brought him in...the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!" (1 Sam. 16:10-12)

Okay, let's look at number one. David had to overcome rejection. David had a really intense family experience. Some people say, "Well, you do not know, but my family was really rough." Those stories are real and by no means do I ever want to minimize a person's traumatic story in their family. The most painful place of hurt, neglect, and abuse is in families. So I think that is really real, but I want you to know David walked in this in a way that we might not pay attention to; we might overlook it.

I have a number of verses here and there are several more I could put here. Let's look at the very first one to show the rejection of David. We will look at this more next week when we look at session three; we are going to look at 1 Samuel 16, the whole context when he was anointed in his, you know about age seventeen. Here it is a little bit ahead of time.

Jesse made seven of his sons come before Samuel because Samuel came to Jesse, who is their father, and said, "Hey Jesse, one of your sons is going to be anointed."

"Wow," he responded, "anointed? My sons?"

"Yes," Samuel answered, "bring your sons here. Bring them all." So they brought seven, but Jesse had eight sons, not seven. He had eight. David was in such a place of lack of favor in his family that when the most famous man in the nation, they ignored him. I mean this would be like Billy Graham and the president coming to your house for dinner in little Bethlehem, little out-of-the-way Bethlehem. It was the biggest privilege they had ever had in their family life.

He said, "I want to have dinner with your sons." They had David out tending the sheep. Tending the sheep would be like mowing the lawn. They could have gotten anyone to do that at minimum wage minus one. That was a nothing job. I mean it was important, but anybody could have done it. This was as if the president and the most powerful prophet in the nation came, because Samuel the prophet was one of the greatest authority figures in the nation and in the government at that time. Saul was first in government, but Samuel was just before Saul. So he was kind of all this combined in one.

Samuel said to Jesse, verse 11, "The Lord has not chosen these seven. I am very perplexed. Are all of your sons here?"

Jesse answered, "Well, technically no, but practically yes. There is one more, Davy. He is out there." Look at this, notice this phrase, "there he is." They are outside having a meal, and he is within sight of the family dinner. He points, "There he is. It is that kid right there."

Samuel is thinking, "What is he doing **over there**?" What **is** David doing over there? The most famous man in the nation, and David is mowing the lawn while they are having dinner? Really that is what is going on. This is not an exaggeration.

⁷Because for Your sake I have borne reproach...⁸I have become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my mother's children; ⁹because zeal for Your house has eaten me up...

¹⁰When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, that became my reproach. (Ps. 69:7-10)

Look at Psalm 69. Some years later David says, "I have born reproach for You, God. In my dedication to You, I have become a stranger to my brothers. My seven older brothers have written me off. They think I am fanatical and completely out of touch. I am an alien to my mother's children. My siblings think I am totally off the wall because of my zeal for You." Now some of you know all about that. Your dedication to the Lord and your decisions cause your own siblings to bring reproach to you. They are against you; they are actually against you.

¹⁰When my father and my mother forsake me...the LORD will take care of me. (Ps. 27:10)

Look what it says here in Psalm 27. David talked about "when my mother and my father forsake me." David knew what it meant to be abandoned, neglected, and rejected by his mom and dad.

¹¹My loved ones and friends stand aloof from my plague, and my relatives stand afar off.

¹²Those also who seek my life lay snares for me. (Ps. 38:11-12)

Psalm 38, "My loved ones"—that is family—"and my friends stand aloof. My relatives stand afar." They will not associate with me. They distance themselves. They are criticizing me. Some of you know that. This is what David was facing in his youth.

2. He was faithful to serve behind the scenes in mundane ways. He was responsible with the small details of what was entrusted to him (1 Sam. 16:10-11; 17:22). Being faithful in small things is one of the main things Jesus will affirm in His people on the last day (Mt. 25:21).

²¹"Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord." (Mt. 25:21)

David was committed. He said, "I am going to be faithful." There are a number of illustrations of this where David was faithful in small things. Then as a king he was a man of integrity in small things, not just big things. It is not like you have integrity if you do the two or three big things; you have integrity if you do the little things. Most of life is little decisions.

Being faithful in small things is so important to the Lord. Look here in Matthew 25:21; it is one of the primary things that Jesus affirms on the last day. I mean on the day where the rewards are given, He points to the faithfulness in little things. You gave your word and you kept it. Well, everybody else does not keep their word; they are a little busy, they are doing something, it is not convenient, they are in a bad mood, they are not feeling good, and they do not do what they said. The Lord would say, "I am not going to rebuke everyone who does that, but **I am** going to reward the people who are faithful in small things." That is one of the primary things that is going to be highlighted at the judgment day. Not a rebuke for the lack of it, but the reward for the doing of it.

- B. **Gibeah:** The Gibeah years covered about age 18 to 22 in David's life (1 Sam. 18-20). His commitment to loving God as the primary goal of his life was *tested by early favor and temporary popularity*. After killing Goliath (1 Sam. 17), David was promoted to national prominence.

²***Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father's house... (1 Sam. 18:2)***

The second city in David's life is Gibeah. He was about age eighteen to twenty-two, right in there, again plus or minus a year or two. Gibeah was just down the way from his hometown, not far away. Gibeah was where King Saul lived. That is where the royal court was, in Gibeah. That was the Washington D. C. of that day. The king, the president, the court, all of the government was in Gibeah.

Well, we know the story well of what happened with David after he was anointed in 1 Samuel 16. There was crisis in the land in 1 Samuel 17, and David killed Goliath, as a seventeen, eighteen-year-old young man. He was promoted to move to Washington D. C. to live in the White House, as it were. That is, he was living in the royal court, a kid from Bethlehem. And this is like, how did this happen? Not only that, it says here in 1 Samuel 18:1 that Saul took David that day and would not let him go home. He said, "You are going to live with me."

1. He was honored by marrying King Saul's daughter and moving into the royal court in Gibeah, the governmental headquarters (Washington, DC). He was given a promotion in the army and celebrated by all Israel including the women who sang of his triumph (1 Sam. 18:5-8).

⁵***And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people...***

⁷***So the women sang as they danced, and said: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."*** ⁸***Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him. (1 Sam. 18:5-8)***

Not only that, but then he married the king's daughter. So not only was he living in the court, he was then part of the royal family. That was a big step from being a shepherd boy, a poor shepherd boy, to being a part of the royal family by marrying the king's daughter.

Look at 1 Samuel 18:5. Saul promoted him to a high position over the military. He was eighteen or so. You do not put an eighteen-year-old young man over the other men of war. Well, Saul did. There was an anointing on David; there was evidence of God's work in him that was unusual. They put an eighteen, nineteen, twenty-year-old over many of the other soldiers in the army. You would think it would make those soldiers mad, but it was the opposite. He was accepted in the sight of all the people in the court, all the people. I am sure there were a few exceptions, but he found favor with the vast majority of people in the court and the surroundings around Gibeah.

As a matter of fact, they were singing songs about him. They sang, "Saul the king, he is a great warrior! He killed a thousand, but young David killed ten thousand." David heard it. I mean it was the top song of the nation, that David killed ten times as much as the king. Ooh, that is not good.

Verse 8, Saul was very angry. He was thinking, "The ladies in the street are saying that twenty year old is a ten-times-more-effective warrior than I am?"

Remember Saul was looking for the one of whom Samuel had said, "Your neighbor who is better than you is going to take over." Saul had been looking for that guy for five or ten years now. He had been looking for five to ten years for the guy who was going to replace him. He was looking everywhere, and now he located who it was. "It's this twenty-year-old kid, of whom they sing is a ten-times-more-effective-warrior than I am, wow!"

Well, understand this—you do understand it because it is obvious—I have rarely in forty years of ministry ever seen promotion in ministry, the marketplace, anywhere, that does not create enemies and strong adversaries. I

do not know that I have ever seen a promotion anywhere that does not create new adversaries. God actually uses that conflict to protect His servants because this causes His servants to reach to God and cry out to God and interact with God in a way that actually protects the servants in their hearts.

People think, "I want that promotion." No matter what your promotion is, it will be very rare if you get that promotion, and you might have several promotions over ten, twenty, thirty, forty years—you probably will—in various spheres of life. You will have adversaries at every promotion if you are like everyone else. There might be an exception here or there, but it is difficult. Promotions do not come without other issues related to them.

2. Early promotion can be part of preparation for future destiny. In this season some become too busy with new opportunities and are distracted from their relationship with God.

²¹The crucible [is] for silver...but man is tested by the praise he receives. (Prov. 27:21, NIV)

In the early promotion of one's ministry—whether in the marketplace, whether it is in athletics, whether it is in music, whether it is in your ministry, whether it is in the government, in the military, the field of education, just wherever it is at, because God has assignments for all of His people in all of those areas and many more—here is what God is doing. It says here that the crucible is for silver, but the human heart is tested by praise. God was testing David's heart by giving him all kinds of praise.

Understand this: when promotion comes, there **is** goodness in the promotion. I am not making promotion all bad. But when we have new opportunities and new favor, we can have a new sense of importance, or at least that is what the enemy wants to give you—a new sense of importance—so your heart gets puffed up. You have new enemies, and the heart of man or woman is tested by praise.

Here is a principle I have found. The way you respond to praise is exactly how you respond to criticism. It is almost exactly an indicator of the other. The way you respond to criticism is how you will ultimately respond to praise. Somebody says, when criticized, "Well, you are wrong. I am not wrong. How dare you?!" When someone praises you, though you might not strut openly, in your heart you will be puffed up. Because if what people say moves your heart in a wrong way when they say good things, when they say bad things it will move your heart in a bad way. If your heart is not primarily moved by what people say—I mean it is always moved a little bit of course—but if you are moved mainly by what God thinks, then you will be stable. So if you really get your buttons pushed negatively with criticism, I assure you that when you get praise, you will go the other direction in pride, because it means you are taking your signals by what people say. That is the primary read where you are taking your life value. That is a dangerous place to live. We are all born with that disposition, but we have got to grow out of it.

The crucible is for silver. That is, you put silver in the crucible, and you use fire to melt it, so you get rid of the dross. The fiery crucible is for silver. When the human heart is tested, it is like that fire. Many people do not understand that a season of promotion is often temporary. I have seen this again for forty years. People think the promotion they are receiving is going to be permanent. Most promotions are not permanent. Almost all promotions are temporary. They may go for some years, or they may not. Like I will meet a young person in ministry, and they get a big, open door in preaching, writing, singing. They think this will be one unbroken string of big doors following another. I explain that it never is like that. Do not imagine this is that. Say to yourself, "I am in Gibeah. It is a temporary promotion. We will see what happens next." Understand you are being tested by a season of praise.

- C. **Adullam:** The Adullam years covered about age 23 to 30 in David's life (1 Sam. 21-31). David's commitment to loving God as the primary goal of his life was *tested by adversity* in the wilderness for about seven years as King Saul and 3,000 soldiers sought to kill him (1 Sam. 24:2; 26:2).

¹David...escaped to the cave of Adullam. (1 Sam. 22:1)

Then the next season is Adullam. David was about age twenty-three to thirty during this season. Now Adullam is out in the wilderness, and you know David hid in the cave of Adullam. He actually went to several places, but I am just using Adullam to signify all the little caves he hid in. This is one of the main places and was one of his headquarters in a temporary way.

So there he was in Gibeah—in Washington D. C.—and everyone was praising him. I mean everything he touched turned to gold. I assume he was thinking it was going to be this way and more for the rest of his life. He did not know the Adullam years were coming next. Then the king got angry and decided to kill him, murder him. So David ran. He fled from the palace from Gibeah. For the next six or seven years he hid and went from cave to cave to cave.

By year three or four maybe he was thinking, "Lord, come on! It has been three or four years. Isn't this coming to an end soon? I have tremendous promises. I have had favor. I have been a national hero. Now I am living out in the wilderness struggling for food, water, housing, and all this stuff. What is this? I was anointed king."

The Lord would say, "I am training you in the Adullam years."

This is when David's love for God and his identity in God were tested by adversity. You might think, "Wasn't he tested by the praise of Gibeah, the promotion of Gibeah?" Yes, but that was temporary. Adullam comes after Gibeah. Now, it does not always follow that way every time. It is not like if you get a promotion then for sure you are going to get wiped out next. That is not what I am saying, because these seasons and these principles overlap in our life. With promotion comes new opportunities, but there are also new adversaries and new testing. You are being tested about how you respond to praise and how you respond to criticism because it is the same reality.

1. The Lord trained David under Saul's evil leadership to be a great warrior king. Since the Lord was training him to be Israel's great warrior king, he needed to know the land. The Lord "put him in the land" instead of sending him to school to study the geography of Israel.

I will use this analogy several times in this course. God was training David to be a great warrior king. Here he is in his twenties. Again he is going to be the greatest warrior king in Israel's history. Well what do you have to know to be a warrior king in the ancient world? You got to know the geography of the land; you have got to know the land. So the Lord says, "Well, David,"—not really He did not say this, but let's make it up—"David, I can put you in geography class and teach you the land, OR I could just put you IN the land." For seven years David ran around from cave to cave. True, he was in Ziklag for a little over a year, almost a year and a half, in one place, but other than that he was moving around cave to cave.

Now, years later, David is king. David is with the presidential cabinet, the military leaders. David says, "We can send a thousand men this way. Do not worry; there is water behind there. If you go around there, there is a cave."

They ask, "How do you know about the water?"

He answers, "I lived in that cave. I know there is water there. It is amazing because at a certain time of the day the sun comes up and there is a reflection, and from that side the enemy cannot see you because of the way the sun is."

Again they say, "How do you know this?"

David says, "I was in the land."

You might feel that you would just rather go to "How to be successful" school and "How to act right" school. When He is going to make you a warrior king, guess where He is going to put you? God puts you in the land. If He is going to make you a healer of human hearts, guess what you are going to experience? The need to get your heart healed. I love the healing, but I do not like the reason I need the healing. Let the reader understand.

2. When God raises up His "Davids," He trains them in the "seminary of Saul," sometimes using a demonized leader who mistreats them, to help them grow deep in their relationship to God.
3. Nobody could hinder God's will in David's life—not Saul, nor the Philistines, nor any other. The only one who could stop David's destiny was David—by responding in a wrong way.

Here is the good news. Nobody could stop the will of God in David's life. Nobody could. Saul could not with 3,000 men. The Philistines could not stop David. The devil could not stop David. The only man that could stop David in the will of God was David by quitting and giving into compromise.

Beloved, nobody can stop you in the will of God. You might be delayed, you might have adversaries, but it is only for a season. If you do not quit, and you do press in—I do not mean just do not deny the faith, but if you do not quit pressing in—and if you will not quit going after it, I promise you that the will of God will happen in your life. Nobody can stop it.

4. When we feel the pain of mistreatment, disappointment, or delay, the darkest issues of our hearts come to the surface. Our pain in not receiving the recognition that we expect is often linked to our *unperceived pride*. This is the greatest enemy of our calling.

⁹"The heart is deceitful above all things...who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9)

¹²Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret [unperceived] faults. (Ps. 19:12)

5. I compare our unperceived pride to the fault lines that lie below the surface in an earthquake zone. They come to the surface in our life under the pressure of mistreatment, delay, etc. Pressure brings the truth of our desires and pride to the surface so that we can see them.
6. About 10% of our life is determined by what happens to us and 90% by how we respond to it. We either *become bitter* by focusing on the wrong that was done to us or we *become better* by focusing on our pride that is exposed. The lesser enemy in David's life was Saul, whom God used to expose the greater enemy—the sin and pride in his own heart.

I have read different quotes like this. I do not know exactly who said it, but different guys have said a similar thing. Ten percent of our life is determined by what happens to us. Ninety percent of our life is determined by how we respond to it. Many people think it is the opposite. They think ninety percent of their life is what happens to them, like the doors that open. No, that is about ten percent. The way you respond to it is what determines your life in the ten, twenty, thirty-year picture when you look back.

7. I do not consider that we are ready for our full calling until we have successfully passed through several seasons of disappointment. By that, I mean that we have learned to respond to disappointment in humility (servanthood and gratitude), rather than drawing back from serving, with our hearts tinged with bitterness (often referred to as burnout).
 8. **Leadership Lesson:** Endurance, with a long-term perspective, is essential in walking out one's full prophetic destiny and promises.
- D. **Hebron:** The Hebron years covered age 30 to 37 in David's life (2 Sam. 2-5). David was tested by receiving only a *partial fulfillment* of the promises for which he had long labored and waited.
- ¹David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I go up to any of the cities of Judah?" And the LORD said to him, "Go up." David said, "Where shall I go up?" And He said, "To Hebron." (2 Sam. 2:1)**

*David is in Hebron, the city of Hebron, for seven years, from age thirty to thirty-seven. This is the time where David is tested—catch this—by the **partial fulfillment of the promise** that he has been laboring and waiting long for. What do I mean by that? David is age thirty. Saul died just before that; Saul was killed in battle some weeks before that, so now Saul is not chasing him. David is free. Remember there are twelve tribes, and God told David that he would be king over all twelve. But in Hebron only one tribe—the tribe of Judah—came to David. They said, "Hey, we want you to be king."*

1. In Hebron, David was king over only one tribe—Judah. This was just one of the 12 tribes that God had promised him about 13 years earlier.

David was so grateful. He said, "Lord, I just want what You want. My goal is not to be king. My goal is to be faithful. If You want me, if You command me to be the leader, I will be the leader and I will not quit. If You do not command me to be the leader, I do not care. I just want to love You and be loved by You. That is all I want to do, and do the will of God. Beloved, when that is where you are lined up in your identity, your heart is free."

So Saul, his number one adversary, was now dead. The military of Israel was not chasing David any longer. So David's future was wide open because not only had Saul died, but Saul's sons, the heirs to the kingdom, have died. Saul had one son who did not go to war because he did not like war, but it was a warring time in the nations and he was no problem. David could have totally overpowered him in a moment.

David had 600 men who had been with him for these six or seven years that he has been going cave to cave to cave. They said, "David, David, this is remarkable! Saul is dead, all the heirs, his sons, have died. You are the anointed guy. Everybody knows it. Let's do it."

David does exactly the unthinkable. 2 Samuel 2:1—look at this—David inquired of the Lord, "Shall I go up?" He is still in the wilderness years. "Shall I go up to any of the cities?"

God said, "Yes, go up."

David asked, "Which one?"

He said, To Hebron."

David's men did not want him asking the question if the Lord wanted him take a position now. They thought, "David, of course you are the king! What do you mean? Do not ask God that He might say something."

David asked, "Should I go up?"

They are all saying, "God is going to tell you go to Gibeah, to go take over the royal court in Gibeah."

The Lord said, "David, I am glad that you asked. I want you to go to Hebron. I want you only over one-twelfth of what I promised you. You have endured seven, six, seven, or eight years in the wilderness, suffering. You know what? I want you to do it My way. I do not want you to have the whole thing."

David said, "That is good because I do not even care what my position is. My identity is that You love me, I love You, and therefore I am successful. I want to operate in meekness and do the will of God in small things and then I win."

His men were very different. They were saying, "No! Go to Gibeah, not Hebron. Don't go to Hebron; that is only a little bit of your inheritance."

David said, "That is where I am going."

2. First David saw himself as one who lived *before God*; secondly he saw himself as one whom God had made to be *before men*. In other words, whether he was serving his father as a shepherd or Saul as his armor bearer, whether he was fleeing as a fugitive in the wilderness or ruling as king, David's greatest desire was to love and obey the Lord, regardless of the changing circumstances and seasons of his life.

E. **Jerusalem:** The Jerusalem years covered age 37 to 70 in David's life (2 Sam. 6-24). David was tested by the pressures related to walking in the fullness of the promises and blessings he received.

¹¹***Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments...***

¹²***lest—when you have...built beautiful houses...¹³ and your silver and your gold are multiplied ...¹⁴ when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the LORD. (Deut. 8:11-14)***

Now we have the final city, Jerusalem. This is age thirty-seven to seventy, covering thirty-three years. The testing was very different in Jerusalem, now that he was the king over all twelve tribes of Israel, now that he was over the nation. He moved the capital from Gibeah to Jerusalem. Now David is tested by a whole other set of pressures. Now he has all the prominence, he has the authority, he has the fullness of blessing. As one preacher said, "New levels, new devils." New levels of breakthrough, new levels of power, and new devils attack you as Francis Frangipane said.

1. David's season of greatest blessing was also his most dangerous season, spiritually speaking. Scripture records that his greatest failures, along with many pressures, occurred in this season.
2. David has many pressures while in Jerusalem as the fullness of his destiny will be realized
3. 1 Samuel describes how a young David was mistreated by an older, jealous leader—Saul.
2 Samuel describes how an older David was attacked by a young, ambitious leader—Absalom.

*Listen carefully: David's season of **greatest blessing** was his **most dangerous** season spiritually. God told Moses in Deuteronomy 8 in essence, "Beware, beware when you get the beautiful houses and the gold and the silver and everything has started happening. Beware because that is the place where you will be more tempted to draw back from obedience than any other time." You do not have to draw back, but He says the temptation will be intense. The voices around you will be into all those kinds of things, and they will be coaxing you and wooing you and seducing you into those things. He says, "Beware. You do not have to yield in time of multiplication."*

I believe God wants to bless people economically in huge ways in His kingdom. He wants to bless them so they use the economics to do the will of God, not to get comfortable in their wealth and to draw back. God had many servants through history who did not draw back. They did it right, and David is one of them. Beloved, in the time of full blessing understand this: when full blessing comes, meaning the fullness of purpose, it does not mean the pressures are gone. David had so many pressures and attacks, so many things hitting him in the hour of the full blessing.

Some people are picturing full blessing under the anointing as everyone is happy, the glory of God, the devil is on a leave of absence, and just a "Wow, this is working!" No, it does not work that way. The devil is roaring, stirring up, attacking, and all kinds of people are jealous, with agendas, turns, and twists. The Lord says, "I am with you. I am with you. I want you. I will give you the power to make godly decisions, power to manifest my presence. I will give you power to keep your heart right, but you are going to understand that you are in a time for which have I prepared you through your whole life."

The reason for David's rigorous preparation in the four cities before Jerusalem was because he had the greatest challenges and the greatest danger when he got into the Jerusalem season. So those other four cities made more sense then. Amen! Let's stand before the Lord.