

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, January 23, 2013 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

DAVID... A MAN AFTER GOD'S HEART
“God's Heart, God's Man, God's Ways”
1 Samuel 13:13-14, 1 Samuel 16:1, Psalm 78:70-72

Few men of history have been so gifted and respected as the sweet singer of Israel, David, the youngest son of Jesse. His personality was a strange combination of simplicity and complexity. As one man writes, *“He swung between extremes, but paradoxically evidenced an abiding stability. The oscillating needle always returned to its pole – God Himself.” (J. Oswald Sanders, “Robust in Faith”)* Being a man after God's heart, David longed to serve Him well, whether an obscure shepherd boy along the Judean hillsides or the highest reigning monarch of authority. But woven through his enviable life were tough threads of humanity, which keep us from worshipping the man today. While great and gallant, David was nevertheless merely a man, plagued with flaws in his character and failure in his reign. May this study help us realize that devotion – no perfection – is the secret of living a life that pleases God. We need that reminder every day of our lives.

Such a description as “a man after God's own heart” can refer to only one person in Scripture – David. He can be pictured in so many ways: the youngest son of Jesse, the youthful shepherd of Bethlehem, the giant-killer, he was the teenaged king-elect, composer of psalms, Saul's personal musician, Jonathan's close friend, he was first hunted as a fugitive, then the king of Israel, he was the father of Solomon, he went from being a champion in battle to an aged and troubled monarch. In verbal panorama, this was God's choice servant. But observe these contrasts: he was a man of glorious triumph... yet great tragedy; he was uniquely gifted... but human to the core; he was strong in battle... weak at home. It is important for us to drop back behind the obvious to see the factors which led to his anointing. Let's focus on God's work and preparation behind the scenes.

I. A PRINCIPLE WORTH REMEMBERING (1 Corinthians 1:26-29)

David was not studded with astounding and irresistible qualities which God felt compelled to use. That's not God's style. In New Testament times, Paul stated God's style of selecting men in unmistakably simple terms. Speaking to Christian brothers – called by God – he reminded them in no uncertain terms of God's style in **1 Corinthians 1:26-29**, *“²⁶ Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.²⁷ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.²⁸ He chose the lowly things of this world and the*

despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are,²⁹ so that no one may boast before him.”

What do you think this tells us about those God uses? Can you think of any other Biblical examples? (Noah... do you think those around Noah though he was “wise” when he started building a boat in the desert? What about Abraham and Sarah... do you think they thought Abraham wise when he left his country for a place that he didn’t know where he was going... or when he kept saying God is going to make me a great nation even those he and his wife had no children and were way past the years of child bearing? What about Moses... do you think the Israelites thought Moses wise and influential when they look up and saw the Egyptian army pursuing them with their back against the Red Sea, oh Moses is so wise and influential he can talk the Egyptians into not killing us or taking us back into slavery? And on and on that list goes, doesn’t it?

Did you see it? Why? So *“that no one may boast before him.”* As Paul’s believing contemporaries were unable to boast, neither was David more than ten centuries earlier.

The Principle: *God’s choice of a person is contrary to human reason, and not Christian should ever utter the words, ‘God can’t or won’t use me!’ He will if you’ll let Him!*

II. A HISTORICAL BACKDROP WORTH STUDYING

Man’s ways and God’s ways of selecting leaders are marked by sharp contrast. God’s manner is best illustrated with David, while man’s is tragically demonstrated in the selection of his predecessor – Saul.

1. The People’s Choice (1 Samuel 8:1-9,2)

- (1) **Their times** – Forty years before David’s inauguration, the period of the judges had come to its end. Eli, a venerable high priest, grew old and died. His sons succeeding him were grossly immoral. The boy whom he had adopted and raised, Samuel, had also grown old, and his sons failed to walk before God in integrity (*1 Samuel 8:3*). The people of the land had detached themselves from God.
- (2) **Their demand** – No longer satisfied with God’s method of leading the nation, the Israelites wanted a king. Why? For three reasons:

3 Reasons Israel Demanded a King:

[1] **Samuel was old**

[2] **His sons were disobedient**

[3] **Other nations had kings** – The Israelites wanted to be like them.

- (3) **Samuel’s response** – The prophet went to God in prayer. God corrected Samuel’s perspective with the words, *“... they have not rejected you, but... Me...”* God instructed him to hear the people’s request, but also to warn them of the kind of life they would encounter under such a regime (*1 Samuel 8:10-18 – They would lose freedoms that they had once enjoyed*). The people did not heed that warning.

- (4) **Saul chosen** – God called Samuel’s attention to a man who possessed perhaps the only qualifications the people would accept: he was “choice”... more handsome than any Israelite male, and taller than any of the people (1 Samuel 9:2). This physically attractive man, as a king, became self-willed, hot-tempered, paranoid, and cowardly. Overcome by depression and hallucination, he eventually took his own life.
2. **The Lord’s Choice** – Whereas man looks for external traits, God looks for the internal qualities of the heart (remember 1 Corinthians 1:26-29). The first prediction of David appears in 1 Samuel 13:14. With God displeased over the manner of Saul’s reign, Samuel reported to the king a change in the making, “... *the Lord has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has appointed him as ruler over His people...*” Note the qualities for which God looks:

3 Qualities God Looks For in the One He Uses:

- (1) **Spirituality (1 Samuel 13:14)** – Key phrase, “*after His own heart.*” David’s life was in complete harmony with the Lord’s desires (see 2 Chronicles 16:9)
- (2) **Humility (Psalm 78:70, Psalm 89:19-21)** – Key phrase, “*David His servant*” (Ps. 78:70) and “*David My servant*” (Ps. 89:20). Servants are successful only because they can graciously accept lower rank and set aside self-dependence. David was genuinely and wholeheartedly unaware of himself.
- (3) **Integrity (Psalm 78:72)** – Key phrase, “*he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart.*” David’s heart... his mind... was complete, whole, innocent, sound and unimpaired.

3. A Biblical Principles (1 Samuel 16:7) –

“⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.’” -1 Samuel 16:7

The Principle: *Man’s ways are not God’s way. Man looks that externals. God looks at the internals and eternals.*

III. A TRAINING METHOD WORTH OBSERVING

In reviewing the earlier years of David’s life before taking the throne, the Lord’s methods of training His man can be seen. Four words describe the training method.

4 Words That Describe the Training Method of God:

1. **Solitude** – God trained the young shepherd away from the noise of the crowd. He was alone, surrounded only by sheep. Living in the open, he was exposed to nature – confronted by wild animals, fierce winds, and heavy rain. *What does this tell us about those often chooses to use?*

2. **Obscurity** – Though God placed him in a setting where he was unseen and unapplauded... David was still faithful in menial things. *What do you think this tell us about those often chooses to use?*
3. **Monotony** – God allowed David to wrestle for an extended time with insignificance and routine. With no relief in sight, he maintained daily... faithfully. *What does this tell us about those often chooses to use?*
4. **Reality** – On occasion, God allowed him exposure to threat and death. He did not shelter David from reality. One example of this is recorded in 1 Samuel 17:33-37, when he stood across the ravine from the infamous Philistine giant, Goliath. David became aggressive.

IV. TWO TRUTHS WORTH ACCEPTING

1. **It is in the “little things” that we prove ourselves capable of “big things”** – Remember Jesus’ words in **Matthew 25:23**, in the Parable of the Talents to the one who invested what little was entrusted to him. The master said to him, *“Well done good an faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come share your masters happiness!”* You see it’s not how talented you are, how skilled and able you are. It’s how available you are to be used! How willing! And a willingness to depend solely on Him. That make you useful to God.
2. **When God develops inner qualities, He is never in a hurry** – Remember that God’s timing is not our timing. We must learn to wait and trust Him, and not get ahead of God. David learned this, he said in **Psalm 27:14**, *“Wait for the Lord, be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.”* It’s good advice!