

Principles That Are Alive

by Dale Rhoton

The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting God and having basic confidence in God's plan, even in the midst of suffering and challenges.

Duration: 48:59

Scripture: 1 Samuel 24:7, Matthew 6:33, Acts 9:16

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Gods Transformation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of not giving up on people, even when they seem to be struggling or not living up to their potential. He shares personal experiences of witnessing individuals who were initially seen as failures, but later developed and became impactful in their faith. The speaker encourages the audience to trust in God's power and love, as He is able to bring about transformation in individuals and situations. He also discusses the importance of discerning between being in the flesh and in the spirit, and highlights the significance of spending time with God to recognize His voice. The sermon references the story of David and Saul from 1 Samuel 24.

Transcript

This evening we'll be going through a passage of scripture together, and we'll be noticing this theme of the greatness of God and how we can trust God for whatever situation that we are in. But before that, I thought I would share with you some little research that I have done. You've heard George, I've heard him many times, refer to a certain book as the book of the year, and then there's the book of the decade, and then there's the book of the century, and it really gets confusing when you've got about three or four books of the decade.

And it gets even more confusing when George says, you know, I know this is the book of the decade, I haven't had a chance to read it myself. And so I thought, wouldn't it be interesting to do a real study, a scientific study, to find out what is the book of the century. And I just wanted to share with you my results, a very unbiased opinion poll that I took, and here it is, the logo story, this is the book of the century.

The book of the century, ladies and gentlemen. I've done it in a scientific way, I've looked through my post, and the book that is mentioned by far the most is the Logos story. And just even here at the conference just this morning, as I was seated at the breakfast table, one young lady said, you know, I've just read the Logos story, people are talking about it all over the world, literally.

It's in English, it's in German, Swedish, Dutch, Spanish, I don't know how many different languages, I honestly cannot keep up with them all. But that is definitely the book of the century, so when George Brewer stands up again, you can just stand up and say, George, we know the book of the century, a scientific poll has been conducted, and it is the Logos story. So just to set the record straight.

And there is one book that far excels the book of the century, but that wasn't written in this century, it was written a long time ago, and if you'd like to turn with me to 1 Samuel 24, we'll read one chapter from that book. One chapter from that book, I find it an exciting chapter. And what excites me about it is just so much of what Tom was just sharing with us in the life of David.

Isn't it beautiful to see that principles that we read about thousands of years ago, that those principles are still alive and they're real today. And so we want to look, we're going to read through 1 Samuel 24, and then I'd like to just take a little bit of time to go through it and just look at a few principles that David experienced and principles that are alive, they're operative this evening in each one of our lives as we open our hearts to him. Let's just begin reading 1 Samuel 24.

After Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, David is in the desert of En Gedi. So Saul took 3,000 chosen men from all Israel and set out to look for David and his men near the crags of the wild goats. He came to the sheep pens along the way, a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself.

David and his men were far back in the cave. The men said, this is the day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish. Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

Afterward, David was conscious stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe. He said to his men, the Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, or lift my hand against him, for he is the anointed of the Lord. With these words, David rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul, and Saul left the cave and went his way.

Then David went out of the cave and called out to Saul, my Lord, the king. When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. He said to Saul, why do you listen when men say David is bent on harming you? This day you have seen with your own eyes how the Lord delivered you into my hands in the cave.

Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you. I said I will not lift my hand against my master, because he is the Lord's anointed. See, my father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand.

I cut off the corner of your robe, but did not kill you. Now understand and recognize that I am not guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion. I have not wronged you, but you are hunting me down to take my life.

May the Lord judge between you and me, and may the Lord avenge the wrongs you have done to me, but my hand will not touch you. As the old saying goes, from evildoers come evil deeds, so my hand will not touch you. Against whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog? A flea? May the Lord be our judge and decide between us.

May he consider my cause and uphold it. May he vindicate me by delivering me from your hand. When David finished saying this, Saul asked, Is that your voice, David, my son? And he wept aloud.

You are more righteous than I, he said. You have treated me well, but I have treated you badly. You have just told me of the good you did to me.

The Lord delivered me into your hands, but you did not kill me. When a man finds his enemy, does he let him go away unharmed? May the Lord reward you well for the way you treated me today. I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands.

Now swear to me by the Lord that you will not cut off my descendants or wipe out my name from my father's family. So David gave his oath to Saul. Then Saul returned home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

Let's just pray again. Father, how we worship you this evening for your beautiful word. And we praise you for these principles that we see here.

And we praise you, Lord, that the very life that David lived, those same spiritual principles, the same God, Lord, that that's our situation this evening. And we pray, Lord, since this is your word, speak to our hearts, apply it. You know, Lord, that we at best are clumsy servants.

But we know that your word is so powerful that if we'll but read it and think upon it, that you're able by your Holy Spirit to apply it to our hearts, to excite us, to obey you, to trust you, to know you. And we pray, Lord, that as we spend time in this chapter this evening, that we will know you. And that by knowing you, our characters will be transformed, our personalities released to enjoy the fullness of life that you have for each one of us.

We pray in that all-sufficient name of Jesus, our Lord, our Savior. Amen. Let's read through the chapter once more.

And this time we'll just pause and just notice a few principles that pop out. So relevant today, we can read other religious writings, other books from other philosophies and religions, and they are so cold and so irrelevant. And yet when we read God's word, we say, isn't that what I'm going through right now? And I believe as we read these words, you'll say, yes, that applies to me tonight, right where I am.

To me, that's the thing that's my biggest struggle right now. As I read this chapter, and I've read it a number of times in recent weeks, that's been the echo that has come from my heart. Chapter 24, verse 1, again.

After Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, David is in the desert of En Gedi. So Saul took 3,000 chosen men from all Israel and set out to look for David and his men near the crags of the wild goats. How would you feel if you had 3,000 chosen men that had one purpose in life, and that was to annihilate you? How would you feel? Well, we've never had anything quite like that, I suppose, any of us.

And yet we have gone through times where we've sensed very unusual stress and strain. God's people are wonderful, thrilling, exciting people. They're loving people, God's people, Christians.

And yet at times we can get the feeling even among God's people that someone there is after us. That somehow personality clashes. Somehow there comes a competition that we hate to even admit is there in Christian work.

I remember hearing one of the leaders of Love Europe back some months ago in the springtime making this statement. And he said, you know, a number of times I've had the feeling that if we just were to fold up Love Europe, that a lot of OMers would breathe a sigh of relief. And I guess I could identify a little bit of that with the ship ministry.

We know that the rest of OM loves us and they're united with us. But I know at the same time we're a pain in the neck with all of the demands for recruits and then the big financial projects and all of these stresses and strains that come upon us. And it brings the big basic question, why this? Why do we go through these things? Even here at the conference and talking with a number, and you've probably talked with a number, going through some real valley experiences.

Maybe not with 3,000 chosen men out to annihilate them, but inwardly they feel that crushing pressure just as sharply perhaps as David felt. And as I pondered that, I thought of some verses in the New Testament that seem to bring all of this to a head. If you have your Bibles, you may like to just follow along or otherwise maybe make a note of it.

You probably know these verses by heart. Acts 9.16, when the Apostle Paul was called and sent to be an apostle, what did God say about him right at his time of calling? He said, I will show him, Acts 9.16, I will show him how much he must suffer for my name. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.

Why this suffering? And then in Acts 14.22, a very similar verse where Paul mentions was strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true in the faith. And he gave this word, this was their word of encouragement to remain in the faith. We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.

Any gospel that we preach, it costs a lot. It costs a lot. You all know Philippians 1.29, it is given for us not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.

Suffering is at the core of God's working in your life and my life. It's at the core. I'm not saying that God is there just wanting to heap it on us.

I don't think that. I think God is a loving God, a merciful God. He wants to spare us of suffering.

Oh, surely he does. But brother and sister, this is a mystery. It was true in David's life.

It was true in Paul's life. And it's true in your life. It's that suffering is at the core.

It's at the heart of God's working in your life. He's a loving God. He wants you to have joy and peace.

But somehow he does not spare us of suffering. It's sort of his workshop to build us, to build that character. It was true 3,000 years ago, but it's just as true today.

And we must understand that. Or much of life is a big riddle that we will never solve. Let's read on.

Verse 3, he came to the sheep pens along the way. A cave was there and Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were far back in the cave.

And look at verse 4. The men said, this is the day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish. Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe. What do we tell people? How do you find the will of God? You know what we tell

people? We say, well, there's scripture.

You're hearing this verse, aren't they? They said, look at what God has said, David. This is the word of God. What else do we say is important in finding God's will? Advice of other godly people.

Well, what was their advice? Their advice was kill them. Go for it, David. What's another important factor in finding God's will? Circumstance.

Don't you believe God just arranges circumstances? Well, what an obvious circumstance here was this enemy right there. I mean, I mean that. Can you believe it was just an accident of all the different places? I mean, I'm sure there were other places Saul could have relieved himself.

It wasn't the only place in the world, but I mean, it's obviously of the Lord. Take the dagger and put it through him, David. But of course, there's another very important principle, isn't there? And that is that still, small voice.

It is differentiating between being in the flesh and in the spirit. How do you tell somebody how to distinguish that? It's not something you can explain easily, is it? It's something you experience over many years. You experience it when you fall flat on your face because you made a decision in the flesh.

And later on, you just see I was in the flesh and I have to wait. I have to get on my knees and know that still, small voice, that voice of the master. How do you learn to recognize anyone's voice? By spending time with him over a period of time, years.

A very real experience for all of us day by day. Verse 5, afterward, David was conscious stricken. You would think, my David.

I mean, you know, you didn't kill him. What are you talking about being conscious stricken about? Here was a man sensitive to the voice of God. And we have to ask ourselves, am I really sensitive? I think even of these days here at the conference where so much is going on.

It's such a fast rate. And on the ships, pray for us in this realm. And I'm sure that all of you wrestle with it too.

But things get going so fast. Oh, the danger of not hearing the voice of God. The danger of becoming calloused, hardened.

And just going on in our own energy, our own thinking, our own machinery. But David was conscious stricken, a sensitive heart. Contrast him with those faithful men of his.

I'm sure they were godly men. They loved God. What a contrast.

For having cut off a corner of his robe, he said to his men, The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, or lift my hand against him, for he is the anointed of the Lord. And as I read that, I thought, who is the anointed of the Lord today? Who is the anointed? And the Bible makes it very clear. The anointed of the Lord today are all those people who claim the name of Jesus Christ.

All of those who have bowed their knee before Jesus Christ and have said, I give you my life, and I accept your life. I give you my sin, and I accept your pardon. I give you my confusion, and I accept your peace.

Every man, woman, or child who has bowed his knee to Jesus Christ as Lord, that is an anointed one. If you want some verses on that, you can read 2 Corinthians 1.21, you can read 1 John 2.27, and there are many other verses that at least lead in that direction. So all believers today are the anointed of the Lord.

And that means there should be a holy awe in my heart when I am face to face with someone in the family of God. I've shared this many times, but it's something that still to this day excites me. I did a study many years ago in the Gospels about how Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, responded when his disciples were criticized in his presence.

And I discovered this, that every time one of his followers was criticized in his presence, he defended them. Every time. Sometimes they were wrong.

Sometimes they had blown it, even on the basic first principles. But every time Jesus just jumped to his feet, and he put his arm around them, and he defended them. We read in the book of Revelation chapter 12, verse 10, that there's another side to this coin, and the other side is that the devil, night and day, Satan, night and day, the Bible says, accuses the brethren.

He accuses our brothers and sisters. He accuses those who have been bought by the blood of Jesus Christ. That is what he is beaming out.

And then we have the antithesis to that in Hebrews 7.25, where it says that Jesus Christ ever lives to make intercession for his own. Hebrews 7.25. Jesus, living constantly at the Father's right hand, praying for you and for me, for that pastor with whom we'll be working with in a few weeks, for Christians, some of them very weak, some of them appearing stronger, some of them ones that rub us the right way and we're excited about, some who rub us the wrong way and we wish they were on the other team. Jesus is there defending everyone.

And as I read this and see this beautiful example in the life of David, this total commitment, I'm not going to raise my voice, I'm not going to raise my hand against the Lord's anointing. I see that echoed by our lovely Lord himself throughout the Gospels as he put that into practice in a way that David himself was unable to. And as an example for you and me this evening, oh, what the Church of God needs most of all around the world is a rededication a rededication of our lives to this principle, I'm going to defend my brothers and sisters, I'm going to stand up for them, I'm not going to touch the Lord's anointing.

There is enough garbage in the world without my adding to it, by smearing the name of another. And not only the negative side, but the positive side, actually to say things which will promote love and unity. Oh, what a desperate need there is.

I often think that those people on the teams or on the ships or in the churches, wherever they are, that in some ways are the most valuable ones or perhaps those that don't have any real sparkling talent that is noticeable, but they're just simply as the oil to bring about that harmony, that love, that unity. Because our Lord said it's when that happens that people are going to believe. A very relevant verse for you, for me, this evening, may God make it real in each one of our lives.

Verse 7, with these words, David rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way. The right place for rebuke, listen, men, I love you, but it's sin.

You're tearing down what God has anointed. Oh, how subtle it can be. And how sad to see so many churches, mission organizations, teams, that have been whittled down to nothing just because of the

failure to obey this principle.

Verse 8, then David went out of the cave and called out to Saul, my Lord, the king. When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. He said to Saul, why do you listen when men say David is bent on harming you? This day you have seen with your own eyes how the Lord delivered you into my hands in the cave.

Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you. I said I will not lift my hand against my master because he is the Lord's anointed. See, my father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand.

I cut off the corner of your robe, but did not kill you. Now understand and recognize that I am not guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion. I have not wronged you, but you are hunting me down to take my life.

May the Lord judge between you and me. May the Lord avenge the wrongs you have done to me, but my hand will not touch you. And I think that this verse and the concepts that we're coming to right now are so important.

I think that we're wrestling here with a doctrine in the scripture that we all very easily say that we believe, of course, but that we practice so little. And that is a basic confidence that God will accomplish through us what he has planned. If you really believe that with every fiber of your being, that God will accomplish his purpose through your life.

You know, if we really believe that, it would spare us a lot of grief. It would spare us a lot of anxiety. It would spare us a lot of possessiveness, jealousy.

It would spare us from attacking others, even as it spared David here. I think in my own situation, faced with the challenge of Logos 2, we need a lot of people. We need a lot of money.

We need a lot of agreement. Just every day there are things in the project that come up where people can have such strongly opposed viewpoints. Whether you talk about the working hours on the ship.

Whether you talk about how the cabins should look. Whether you talk about certain aspects of the ministry. Whatever you talk about.

There are things that people believe very strongly. Things that they've reflected on over a long period of time. And these things can make us anxious.

Do you ever have the feeling in your life, I'll tell you a feeling that I get. Often it comes, and I try to rebuke it with this teaching right here. But a feeling of panic.

Things are out of my control. I notice that about me. When I see that things are getting out of my control, I panic, I get anxious, and I get possessive, and I overreact to people.

I become nasty and rude. Now why do I do that? Why do I do that? It's because deep down in my heart, deep down somewhere, there is some lack of understanding who God is. If I really knew who God is.

If I really knew with every fiber of my being God is all powerful and he loves me. You know, if you take those two great doctrines and put them together, that spells peace, joy, release. It spells a wonderful Christian life, doesn't it? I think there is no doctrine more important for you and for me in living the Christian life than to have the doctrine of who God is.

And not only just to believe it, but to know it, to experience it. So wonderful to hear what Tom was sharing. I mean, if God is almighty, why not? Why not? But so often we plan, and by the way, Tom, I used to tell testimonies of how I fly Malaysian Airways out to Singapore and take 37 kilos and don't get charged overweight, and I thought that was sensational.

But 250, 300 kilos of God's Word, that's a challenge for me, I tell you. Boy, I go back to square one on that one. God! What is your concept of God? What is my concept of God? Do we know God? That's what it comes to.

Isn't that wonderful the way David puts it here? May the Lord judge. He had such total confidence. I don't need to defend myself, guys.

What are you guys so anxious about? God's here. God's going to take care of me. You think Saul is a threat to God? He just could rest his whole thing with God.

I think of Logos 2. I think of the things that you're wrestling with. When you compare them with God, it's ridiculous, isn't it? Ridiculous. Ridiculously small problems.

They say missionaries need a good sense of humor. Maybe what we need to learn to do is to just look at those things that really bug us and bother us and just get them in perspective with God and then just have a good laugh. Wow! Wow! I can hardly see it and God! That bothers me and I really believe God's all-powerful and He loves me.

It is hilarious how we can get so caught up. The field leaders had the joy of having Gordon and Gail McDonald share some things with us and Gordon shared with us a little thing from the Peanuts comic strip. It was raining very, very heavily and Lucy and Linus were talking to each other and as the just tremendous rain poured pouring down she said to Linus she said, you know, I'm afraid with this rain that the whole world is just going to be flooded.

It's just going to there's not going to be any dry place on the whole world. We're just going to be totally flooded out. There won't be any safe place to go.

She was really panicking and Linus said, well, you know, you don't have to worry about that because that did happen once and then God said He'd never do it again and that's why He's put the rainbow up there so as a promise that He'll never do it again. And she said, oh, well that makes me feel good. And He said, sound theology has a way of doing that.

Sound theology has a way of doing that. Has a way of making us feel good. And that's what God wants.

He wants us to feel good in our heart. Not because it's not black out there. Not because there isn't suffering at the very core of what He's doing in our lives.

Not because there aren't incredible dangers. Not because others have not failed. But because God is good.

He's powerful. He's loving. Oh, pray for us that we could just get the number one doctrine right in our own hearts and in our own minds.

Let's move on. Verse 14, Against whom has the King of Israel come out? Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog? A flea? May the Lord be our judge. Again, he just says it's God.

And decide between us. May He consider my cause and uphold it. May He vindicate me by delivering me from your hand.

You've read the Psalms where David prays and there are real problems to a lot of people where he just prays, you know, just terrible things that come upon his enemies. Would to God that we were all like that. That we let it all out to God.

He didn't go and try to rectify the situation himself by chopping down his enemies either by word or physically. He didn't go to his brothers and sisters and create gossip. But he poured out his heart to God alone.

And that's what we should do. He was very honest. He didn't say, Lord, you know, I have a great love for this man, Saul.

He was very honest and said, God, you know that he opposes you and made this happen to those that oppose you. And he was very clear, very specific, very powerful in his praying. We move on down to verse sixteen.

When David finished saying this, Saul asked, is that your voice, David, my son? And he wept aloud. You are more righteous than I, he said. You have treated me well, but I have treated you badly.

The principle here is the power. Notice here, brothers and sisters, the power of a life that is dedicated to God. The power of someone living in the presence of God.

So powerful that it can take a Saul and bring him to repentance. So often, you and I are in similar situations where things are going bad, there are bad attitudes all over, there's murmuring, complaining, and, and what do we do in situations like that? So often we are caught, aren't we? With the flow. And we begin also to murmur and complain and negative attitudes and feel bad.

But David didn't go with the flow. But rather, because of the presence of God in his own life, he saw God change situations. That we would learn to change situations through the power of prayer, through the power of trusting God.

Oh, that's a tremendous principle to learn, isn't it? A tremendous principle. It's so easy to give up on people. One thing that I've noticed over the years, I've noticed people that others have given up on.

I don't know if you've observed this, but I tell you brothers and sisters, I kid you not, this is no exaggeration, I have seen it many times. I have seen it many times. Do you understand what I'm saying? I have seen it many times.

That someone has given up on some O-M-er could have been another Christian, but the people I'm thinking about are people who have been with us. They've given up. This person is just not material.

That was part A, and with so many of those, I have seen part B, where that person later has developed and has become a man, a woman, that God has used in a remarkable way. That we would learn not to give up, but to trust God, oh, to trust God, to change the individual, to change the situation. You see, if you do have an all-powerful, all-loving God, oh, you can trust Him to do a lot.

You can trust Him to do a lot. And do you know where you can trust Him most? Do you know what you can trust God to do most? To work in His children, because that's whom He loves most. And so if you, if you, a

weak Christian, on your weak knees before an all-powerful God, are praying for another weak Christian, you can be sure that God is going to hear prayer.

He's going to do a miracle. Now, God's timing is different than ours, and you might get up after you pray and go over and look at your brother and sister and say, oh, just like I thought, nothing has happened. But, wait! God might say, look, I'm going to deal in a year from now.

He might say, look, I'm going for the decade view. It might be longer than that. Trust God to change people.

I like verse 17 very much, where Saul says to David, you have treated me well. Any of you who've heard me preach before have heard me read this very famous quotation from Dr. Francis Schaeffer, challenging us to treat people who are created in the image of God in a special way. And I just love, I love these words so much, where he says that we should treat, that there should be a beauty in human relationships.

Isn't that wonderful the way he puts that? The way you and I treat one another, it should be beautiful, so that when people just observe us interacting, they say, isn't that beautiful, just the way they interact? Isn't that beautiful, the way they treat one another? And he goes on to say, in every single relationship of life, to the extent to which I'm in contact with a man or woman, he or she is to be treated in such a way that that man or woman, if he is thinking at all, will say, didn't he treat me well? That's a challenge. You know, I often think of that when I'm interacting with people, and I often feel guilty because I don't always react in that way, but that when we have an interaction with someone, especially in the longer relationships, but also those short relationships are important, that that person thinking back on us will say, didn't he treat me well? And that's exactly what Saul said about David. He treated me well.

You have treated me well. A great challenge to us. I could give many examples of how people have treated me well over the years.

Let's move on quickly. We want to move on so we have plenty of time for prayer this evening, but in this exciting principle, 3,000 years ago, they're alive, they're real, they're just what we need today. Let's move on.

Verse 18, You have just now told me of the good you did to me, and the Lord delivered me into your hands, but you did not kill me. When a man finds his enemy, does he let him get away unharmed? May the Lord reward you well for the way you treated me today. I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands.

Now swear to me by the Lord that you will not cut off my descendants or wipe out my name from my father's family. Now what would you do? Here's a man out to kill you. He gets 3,000 people.

Let's go kill David. And then he says, look, would you give an oath that you'll be kind to my descendants? What would you do? I mean, this is so hard to believe. Verse 25, So David gave his oath to Saul.

You see, David had such confidence in God. God was so big that Saul was just so insignificant. Yeah, Saul, you know, you don't faze me, to be quite honest.

I mean, of course, sure, I'll do it. I mean, it doesn't bother me, you know. You know, I can be generous.

I got God on my side. With God on my side, I can relax, be generous. You know, you can be so generous with your time, your money, your energies, if you really know God is there.

You can be generous. So David gave his oath to Saul. Then Saul returned home.

But David and his men went up to the stronghold. Two chapters later, you know what you read Saul was out to do? You know what he does? Two chapters later, Saul again says, Come on, let's go David hunting and let's get rid of him. But that doesn't stop David.

Let's move over to 2 Samuel 9. 2 Samuel 9. I mean, here, he's given his oath to Saul. And after doing that, Saul is still out to kill him. But what happens in 2 Samuel 9, we'll read just the first three verses.

David asked, Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake? Now there was a servant of Saul's household named Ziba. They called him to appear before David. And the king said to him, Are you Ziba, your servant? He replied.

The king asked, Is there no one still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show God's kindness? He realized it was God's kindness, not his. Ziba answered the king, There is still a son of Jonathan. He is crippled in both feet.

He was crippled. You remember? By the fall, wasn't he? He was crippled in both feet by the fall. And then you read on later in that chapter, the end of verse 7, You will always eat at my table.

He ate at the king's table. And notice the verse, verse 11, The fiddler's chef ate at David's table like one of the king's son. Verse 13, He always ate at the king's table.

Isn't that beautiful? What are the lessons we've learned tonight? One, Treat all God's children well so that all will say, if they really think about it, Didn't he treat me well? We've also learned a lesson in the sovereignty of God, this great God, so great, that we can relax and be good and gracious, non-possessive, trusting him. We don't need to have ulcers, even though suffering is in God's workshop. Another thing we've answered, or another thing we've seen this evening, is if your goodness is answered by hostility, what do you do then? That was David's case with Saul.

Well, you make an oath to be gracious to that person. That's what David did. The Lord's anointed.

Is there some man, woman, or child that you need to make an oath, Lord, I'm going to be gracious to them, to that person, to his descendants. And then you seek them out. That's grace.

We have freely received. Let us freely give. Let's take just a moment in silence and let the Lord search our hearts as we ponder these great lessons.

Are we perhaps this evening, as we enter the prayer time, are we just caught up with a lot of anxiety, anxious about, oh, unlimited things we could be anxious about, our own failures, the challenges before us, are we going to get the recruits, the money, our church's back home loved ones, are we anxious about brothers and sisters in the flesh, sons and daughters, parents, neighbors. Can we even now, in these moments, as we just quietly wait before him, can we just give that burden right now to God and laugh the laugh of faith, oh God, that burden which seems so big to me, it's just a, oh, it's just a drop in your eyes. Can we do that even now, just clear our hearts and our minds and give it to him.

Is there somebody that we need to get right with, somebody that's been robbing that peace with God. How stupid of us. We all do it.

How stupid of us to allow some misunderstanding, some personality conflict, some different way of doing things, to rob us of that peace of God. Let's just give it to God right now. Some individual we don't love the way we should love, we feel guilty about it, well let's not feel guilty, let's just give it to God.

God knows that we're limited, we don't have a great capacity actually, to love. We remember the words we read about David, he showed God's kindness, not his kindness, but God's kindness. God wants to show his kindness through us, his love, his forgiveness.

We're bankrupt, we don't have any of it at all. Lord Jesus, we come into your presence, we bow. You treated everyone well, oh Lord, when people brushed you in the hustle and bustle of the busy day, they saw those sincere eyes looking at them, and they knew there was a man who cared.

Lord, so often we aren't that way, we don't really care, we're superficial, and Lord we just come and we just give it to you, all of this, we just confess it, we just give it to you, cleanse us. May we not wallow in the mire and get into too much introspection. Lord, when we look inside, we just are not blessed.

But when we look to you, we're blessed. Turn our eyes upon you, Lord Jesus. May we see you.

You're our all-sufficiency. And Lord, this evening we shared that David trusted you, that you would accomplish your purpose through him. And Lord, we believe you're that great.

You are so great, you can accomplish what you want to through each one of us. We believe that, Lord. But Lord, down deep at times, doubts seem to arise, and we seem to behave in a manner so different from that.

And we just pray that you would take that sound theology and just put it right at the core of our hearts. That we would know, we would know you're there. Lord, do it.

Prepare our hearts for a time of intercession tonight. May we pray. Pray in the Spirit.

Pray for those things which are upon your heart. Lift us up. Give us faith.

Faith to pray for tens of thousands of Bibles to go into some of these countries we've talked about tonight. May it be multiplied. Oh, God! May there be Moslems saved, sanctified, filled with the Holy Spirit going all over the Middle East, shouting the praises of Jesus.

Lord, you know all those people groups that need the voice of the Lord. May we tonight, as we pray, Lord, claim that by faith. May it happen.

Lord, we want to bring back the King. As we look over this world, we're grieved, we're sorrowing. We see so much sin, confusion, injustice.

And we realize the real answer is to bring back the King. We yearn for that tonight, God. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

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