

# (1 Samuel) Little Things Mean a Lot

by David Guzik

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*David's struggle for survival amidst Saul's jealousy highlights the power of friendship and faith in God's protection.*

**Duration:** 36:40

**Scripture:** 2 Samuel 9:1

**Topics:** "Faithful Living", "Godly Decision"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of small moments and decisions in our lives. He uses the story of David and Jonathan to illustrate this point. David's life takes a drastic turn when Jonathan shoots an arrow beyond him, indicating that he is no longer welcome in the palace and is now a hunted criminal. The preacher warns that our lives can also be changed by small moments of carelessness or bad decisions. He encourages listeners to be vigilant and diligent in their daily lives, as they never know on what small moment their future may hinge upon.

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## Transcript

Let's open up our Bibles to 1 Samuel chapter 20. You see, David has been on the run from King Saul. Saul became jealous of David after David killed Goliath, and this murderous, jealous rage began to rise up within Saul.

He determined in his heart that he wouldn't have David come up as a rival to the throne, and so he endeavored to kill him. He tried just several different ways. He tried to throw spears at him, and that didn't work.

He tried to send assassins to David's house, and that didn't work. David's wife tipped him off, and he was able to escape. Then David fled to a place called Ramah, where he hid out with the prophet Samuel.

And Saul sent teams of assassins against David. And whenever the teams of assassins would come to get David, the Spirit of the Lord would come upon them, and they'd start worshipping God and prophesying with the rest of the prophets there in Ramah. And the Spirit of God was protecting David.

It happened once, twice, three times. Finally, Saul said, I'm going there myself. And the Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul also and protected David.

Well, David's probably wondering, after the Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul at Ramah, maybe his heart has changed. Maybe something has happened within the heart of Saul that makes him a different man now. Maybe he's not so angry at me.

Maybe he hasn't determined in his heart to kill me. So David decides, I'm going to go back and check with Saul's son, my dear friend Jonathan, and see what the situation is. Verse 1 of 1 Samuel 20 Then David fled from Naioth and Ramah and went and said to Jonathan, What have I done? What is my iniquity? And what is my sin before your father that he seeks my life? Jonathan, if I'm guilty of anything, you tell me.

Jonathan, has your heart changed towards me? Maybe you've become persuaded now that I'm in the wrong. If that's the case, Jonathan, tell me up front. David and Jonathan had such a close, wonderful, beautiful friendship that David could hear from Jonathan if he was wrong.

So he asks him, Am I in the wrong? Then tell me. But he wasn't. Look at verse 2. Jonathan said to him, By no means, you shall not die.

Indeed, my father will do nothing, either great or small, without first telling me. And why should my father hide this thing from me if it's not so? In other words, Jonathan wants to believe the best about his father. He's a son.

He has a son's proper affection towards his father. My father isn't out to get you. Perhaps his heart has changed.

Perhaps he was just in a fit of fury before, David. Let's hope and let's pray that maybe my father's heart has changed. And even if he has determined evil against you, then I'll be your early warning system.

I'll warn you. I'll tell you if he's out to get you. He won't do anything without running it by me first.

Now, notice this. Verse 3. Then David took an oath again and said, Your father certainly knows that I've found favor in your eyes. And he says, Do not let Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.

But truly, as the Lord lives and as your soul lives, there's but a step between me and death. Do you sense the desperation in the voice of David as he says those words? The fear. The adrenaline making his heart beat faster and his face flush red.

He's afraid. At certain times in this whole scenario, David has walked on a very high ground of faith. But then other times, he seems to be right down with the rest of us, doesn't he? There's just a step between me and death.

I'm going to be killed at any moment. My life is hanging by a slender thread. It's as if I'm walking on a slippery plank over a great canyon.

I can't do anything. I can't do nothing. I don't know what to do.

Now, what does Jonathan say to his dear friend David in a situation like this? I know what I might say. Because I'm not as wise as Jonathan. I might say something like this.

Put my hands on my hips to David and say, Where's your faith, brother? Come on, don't you love the Lord? Don't you trust him? That's not what David needed. David was in that place where many of us find ourselves. He believed, but he was struggling with it.

Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief. David could have said those words right then.

So look at what Jonathan does. He doesn't preach a sermon. He doesn't give him condemnation.

He doesn't convict him. He just says, verse 4, So Jonathan said to David, Whatever you yourself desire, I'll do it for you. I'll help you.

David, what you need now is help. You don't need a sermon. You know the sermon.

You don't need to be told to trust God. You're fighting to trust God. What you need is help.

And whatever you need, I'll do it for you. And David, well, he says, glad you asked. Because there's something you can help me with.

Here he goes on, and he describes it here, verse 11. David said to Jonathan, Indeed, tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king to eat. But let me go, that I may hide in the field until the third day at evening.

If your father misses me at all, then say, David, earnestly ask permission of me that he might run over to Bethlehem, his city. For there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family. For if he says thus, it is well.

Your servant will be saved. But if he's angry, then be sure that evil is determined by him. You see, David wants to know, where is Saul's heart? Has his heart been changed since the Spirit of the Lord came upon him? Or is he still hardened in his jealous fury? Where is his heart at? Well, friends, you need to know, and I'm sure you understand this, but let me just state the obvious.

There's a lot riding on this for David. If Saul's heart has softened towards David, and if he's willing to deal kindly towards David, then David gets to go back to the palace. David gets to go back to his job as captain in the army of Israel.

David gets to go back to his home. That's pretty good, isn't it? If Saul's heart is hardened towards David, then that means he has to leave all of that behind and flee for his life and live who knows how many years as an outcast and as a fugitive from the armies and the police and the informants of King Saul. Two roads in front of David, and it all depends on Saul's reaction.

David pleads with his friend Jonathan, find it out for me. And this is how we'll do it. You see, in ancient Israel, they kept the calendar by the moon, not by the sun.

As they kept the calendar by the moon, when there was a new moon, that started the new month. And apparently, at the beginning of every month, Saul called together his whole staff for a three-day staff meeting. All the generals, all the captains, all the officials of government would be there, and they'd get together and have a three-day staff meeting.

There'd be a big feast at it. David would be expected to be there. He was a captain in Saul's army.

He was an attendant in the palace. So David's saying, let's look at what Saul's reaction is when I don't show up. I'll go to Bethlehem.

I'll visit my folks. That's what you tell your dad, Jonathan, that I'm in Bethlehem because that's where I'll be. And then let's see what his reaction is.

Going on here, verse 8. Therefore, you so deal kindly with your servant, for you've brought your servant into a covenant of the Lord with you. Nevertheless, if there's iniquity in me, kill me yourself. For why should you bring me to your father, Jonathan? If I'm in the wrong, then why don't you thrust the sword through me right now? I'd rather be killed by you than by Saul.

Let's get it over with right now. If I'm wrong, if there's iniquity in me, I'd rather have you do it than Saul. But look at Jonathan's response in verse 9. And Jonathan said, Far be it from you, for if I knew certainly that evil was determined by my father to come upon you, then would I not tell you? Then David said to Jonathan, Who will tell me? Or what if your father answers you roughly? And Jonathan said to David, Come, let us go out to the field.

So both of them went out in the field. Jonathan agrees to do the test. Okay, David, you stay in Bethlehem.

I'll go to the feast. Let's see what my father's reaction is. But then David scratches his head and goes, Well, how are you going to get the message to me? How am I going to know? You can't just pick up the cell phone and dial David.

How are you going to do it? You know, smoke signals, semaphore flags. How are we going to do this? Well, Jonathan is going to answer. Jonathan has a solution to this, and that's why they're walking out to the field.

But I want you to notice something else. David has just asked Jonathan for a pretty significant favor, hasn't he? Jonathan is going to respond right now by saying, David, you've asked me for a favor. Now I'm going to ask you for a favor.

Look at this. Verse 12. Then Jonathan said to David, The Lord God of Israel is witness.

When I sounded out my father sometime tomorrow or the third day, and indeed there is good toward David, and I do not send to you and tell you, may the Lord do so and much more to Jonathan. But if it pleases my father to do you evil, then I will report it to you and send you away that you may go in safety. And the Lord be with you as He has been with my father.

In other words, Okay, David, I agree. I'll do this test that you propose, and if it's good, I'll report it to you. If it's evil, I'll report it to you.

And if it's evil, then you're going to have to go away. You're going to have to turn your back on everything you know and venture out into the great unknown and live your life as an outcast and a fugitive. But Jonathan agrees.

Now he says, David, I want you to do something for me, beginning at verse 14. And you shall show not only me the kindness of the Lord while I live, that I may not die, but you shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever. No, not when the Lord has cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.

So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David saying, let the Lord require it at the hand of David's enemies. And Jonathan again caused David to vow because he loved him. He loved him because he loved his own soul.

David came to Jonathan. Jonathan, do this favor for me. Sound out your father's heart.

Let's get a reading on this. Jonathan says, OK. Jonathan says to David, I want you to do a favor for me.

And did you pick up what Jonathan was asking for? You may not have caught it because you may not be aware of a custom back then. Back then in the ancient world, they kind of had a custom. You see, when one family replaced another family as head over a nation, right? You've got the family of Saul.

That's the dynasty of Saul or the house of Saul. Saul and all of his descendants will sit on the throne of Israel, right? When that dynasty is replaced by David's dynasty, David and his descendants sitting on the throne, they had a little custom back then. The new dynasty killed everybody from the old dynasty.

You did that to eliminate any potential rival or revenge motivation. And so what Jonathan says to David, he says, David, I know you're being nice to me now, but when you come to the throne, David, promise me that you won't seek revenge, that you won't do a preemptive strike against my descendants, against my house, that you won't treat me according to the ways of the world, but that you'll show kindness to my house forever. And David agreed.

I'm showing a lot of self-control right now because one of the most beautiful stories in the entire Old Testament is how David fulfilled this promise. How David followed through and showed kindness to the house of Jonathan. You can read it for yourself.

It's in 2 Samuel 9, and there's also a little bit in 2 Samuel 21. But friends, we'll just have to wait until we get to that at some future time. But let me tell you, David beautifully fulfilled this vow that he made to Jonathan, and he showed kindness to the house of Jonathan when it was expected by everyone that he'd wipe them out.

Now, back to the practical issue. How's David going to get the message? Jonathan has this figured out. Look at verse 18.

Then Jonathan said to David, tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed because your seat will be empty. And when you've stayed three days, go down quickly and come to the place where you've hid on the day of your deed. Then remain by the stone is El.

Then I will shoot three arrows to the side of it as though I shot at a target. And there I will send a lad saying, go find the arrows. If I expressly say to him, look, the arrows are on this side of you.

Get them and come. Then if the Lord lives, there's safety for you and no harm. But if I say thus to the young man, look, the arrows are beyond you.

Go your way, for the Lord has sent you away. And as for the matter which you and I have spoken of, indeed the Lord be between you and me. Jonathan says, David, this will be the signal.

After I learn the intention of my father's heart, I'm going to come out to this same field. And you go out and hide behind that rock. And I'm going to have a boy with me to chase the arrows.

And I'm going to shoot an arrow. And if I shoot it in a particular place and tell the boy to get it over there, then you know that the answer is good. Saul's heart is changed.

Come on back to the palace. Come on back to your job. Come back to your home.

But if I shoot the arrow beyond him and in a different place, then just as that arrow went beyond, you better keep on going too, David. Because the Lord has sent you away. Did you see Jonathan's word of faith there in verse 22? Go your way, for the Lord has sent you away.

Friends, that's what David needs to remember in the midst of this. It was so easy for David to think that he was a victim in the palm of Saul. That Saul had sent him away.

It wasn't Saul, it was the Lord. The Lord was still Lord over David's life despite everything Saul might do. So they make this agreement that at this crucial time in David's life, either he's going to be welcomed back to the palace and his job and his home, or he's going to be a fugitive until Saul feels like giving up the hunt.

A lot was riding on a message that was going to be brought through just a couple of arrows. Let's go on and see how it turns out here. Verse 24.

So David hid in the field, and when the new moon had come, the king sat down to eat the feast. Now, the king sat on his seat, as at other times, on a seat by the wall. Jonathan arose and Abner sat by Saul's side, but David's place was empty.

Nevertheless, Saul did not say anything that day, for he thought something had happened to him. He is unclean. Surely he is unclean.

Now, this feast would have also had a spiritual or religious significance. And in ancient Israel, there were certain things that a person could do to make themselves ritually unclean or ritually defiled. And if you were ritually or ceremonially defiled, you couldn't participate in the normal religious services.

You had to undergo a ceremony of purification, which really just amounted to sprinkling some water on you, and then you were sort of a ceremony unclean for one day. The next day, you were fine again. So Saul's thinking, David's not here.

Okay, fine. He made himself ceremonially unclean somewhere. Fine.

He'll be here tomorrow. I'll keep my eyes open for him tomorrow. Apparently this feast lasted three days.

So look what happens here on the second day. Verse 27. It happened on the next day, the second day of the month, that David's place was empty.

And Saul said to Jonathan, his son, why has the son of Jesse not come to eat either yesterday or today? The question sounds innocent enough, doesn't it? But if we've got a little perception in our eyes here, you can see that Saul already has a bad attitude against David. Do you know why? Look at what he calls David. The son of Jesse.

You know what Jesse was, right? He was a farmer from the boonies of Bethlehem. He picks about the lowest title he could pick to describe David. He doesn't say, hey, where's that fellow that bravely killed that giant? He doesn't say that, does he? Hey, where's that fellow who killed 200 Philistines? He doesn't say that, does he? Hey, where's that fellow who's my son-in-law? David was Saul's son-in-law.

He doesn't call him son-in-law. He doesn't call him the Philistine killer. He doesn't call him the giant killer.

He calls him derisively the son of Jesse. There you go. Bad attitude already.

Verse 28. Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked permission of me to go to Bethlehem. He said, please let me go, for our family has a sacrifice in the city and my brother has commanded me to be there.

And now, if I've found favor in your eyes, please let me get away and see my brothers. Therefore, he's not come to the king's table. Jonathan gives the explanation.

By the way, it's a true explanation. Jonathan's not lying. David did go to Bethlehem.

Bethlehem wasn't very far from this. And David came back to get the signal on the third day. Fine.

Now let's look at what Saul's reaction is. You can sense the tension in the air as Jonathan asks this. Here it is.

Everything's riding on Saul's reaction right now. And here it is, verse 30. Then Saul's anger was aroused against Jonathan, and he said to him, you son of a perverse, rebellious woman, do I not know that you've chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, you shall not be established, nor your kingdom.

Now therefore, send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die. Right then, Jonathan knew where his father's heart was. He knew that his heart was settled on evil against David.

And if Saul's heart was different towards David, he might have been disappointed that David wasn't there, but he wouldn't have been furious. Well, David's not here. He'll catch it next month.

Fine. No. You know why Saul wanted David there? So that he could have him killed.

So in his anger, Saul first accused Jonathan of siding with David. He said, you've chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame. Might I say, friends, that it was true that Jonathan had chosen the son of Jesse, but not to his own shame.

He chose the son of Jesse to his own glory. Because David was in the right. And then he tried to encourage Jonathan's sense of hurt and self-interest against David.

Do you see the inflammatory words he uses in verse 31? For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, you shall not be established, nor your kingdom. Jonathan, if you never make it to the throne, it's going to be David's fault. You've got to watch out for David.

He's out to get you. It's going to be his fault. Now, you know what's so ironic about this and exposes the blindness of King Saul? Whose fault was it if Jonathan never made it to the throne? Saul's! If Saul had humbled himself, if Saul had walked righteously with the Lord, then the Lord would have established his house, his dynasty over Israel, and the son of Saul would have become the next king.

But Saul's heart was wicked. His heart was proud before the Lord. His heart wouldn't submit to the Lord.

And so because of Saul, the Lord said, Jonathan's not going to be king. As you might expect, Saul tries to blame it on David. And then finally, Saul did what he absolutely should not have done.

Not that anything else was okay in this, but this was like the last straw. He tried to enlist Jonathan's help in killing David. Did you see that at the end of verse 31? Now, therefore, send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die.

Jonathan, bring him to me. You're his friend. He trusts you.

You can be a Judas to him, a betrayer, a traitor. Suck him in and then capture him and bring him to me and I'm going to kill him for he shall surely die. I tell you, politicians haven't changed one bit, have they? You get this right here, for he shall surely die.

Go back to chapter 19, verse 6. Saul heeded the voice of Jonathan, and Saul swore, as the Lord lives, he shall not be killed. Well, there's his campaign promise, right? And later on, in the heat of passion, he shall surely die. What's interesting is that when Saul spoke in 1 Samuel 19, he was speaking the truth.

My friends, David was not going to die at the hands of an enemy. Not Saul, not any other enemy. Not a Philistine, not a Moabite, not anybody else.

David would not die at the hand of an enemy. Surely, he would die at a dearly old age when the Lord gently took him home. No, my friends, David would not surely die as Saul predicted.

Not at all. Saul proposes, but God disposes. And Saul's not in charge of this.

And he can vent his murderous venom against David and against anybody else, but it's not going to work. Notice this, Jonathan does what you should never do with a man like Saul in his state, in his fury, in his folly. Jonathan tries to reason with him.

Look at verse 32. Jonathan answered Saul's father and said to him, Why should he be killed? What has he done? Pretty logical questions, right? Now, Father, run this by me again. Why exactly are we killing David? Because he killed Goliath.

Because he's really popular. Because he's a great captain of the Lord's armies. Because he killed so many Philistines.

Well, obviously, Saul doesn't have any answer for that, does he? No, when you can't come up to an answer to a question like that, what do you do instead? You start throwing spears again. Verse 33, Then Saul cast a spear at him to kill him, by which Jonathan knew that it was determined by his father to kill David. Well, nothing gets by Jonathan, does it? I love the understatement of the Bible.

Verse 34, So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, because his father had treated him shamefully. Jonathan's heart was filled with grief, filled with agony. He couldn't even touch food that day.

He was so worked up. He was so worn out. He wasn't just worn out the injustice of it all.

He knew that a course had been determined. He knew that he and David would be separated from that time on, and now he had to deliver the painful news to David. He does so in verse 35.

And so it was in the morning that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad was with him. Do you see Jonathan dragging his feet, walking like a downcast, depressed man? He can't take it. He has to deliver the message to his friend David.

Go! Get out of here! I can't see you anymore. There's no refuge for you in the palace. There's no refuge for you in your home.

There's no refuge for you among the army of Israel. You're a hunted criminal now. Get out of here!  
Jonathan comes to deliver the message.

Verse 36, he said to his lad, Now run and find the arrows which I shoot. And the lad ran and he shot an arrow beyond him. And the lad had come to the place where the arrow was, which Jonathan had shot.

Jonathan cried out after the lad and said, It is not the arrow beyond you. Jonathan cried out after the lad, Make haste, hurry, do not delay. So Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows and came back to his master.

But the lad did not know anything. Only Jonathan and David knew of the matter. Then Jonathan gave his weapons to his lad and said to him, Go, carry them into the city.

Feed it, kid. I just delivered a message I didn't want to deliver. There's Jonathan pulling back the bow.

His hands are shaking. And he shoots the arrow, not at the closer place where the lad would have to come in and get it. And that would be a good message for David.

He could come back home and come back to everything he knows. But no, the arrow goes beyond. And that arrow flies beyond.

And I don't know if David, from where he was hiding, I don't know if he could see Jonathan shoot it. Maybe he could only hear the sound of the arrow flying through the air. But David could hear it fly and fly and fly and fly.

And he knew that he would have to fly just as far, just as swiftly. But Saul's fury was determined against him. Friends, it took courage for Jonathan to communicate this for David.

If David was rejected and despised and a targeted man, it was dangerous for Jonathan to help him and to identify himself with him. But Jonathan did it and we're so impressed that there's something noble in Jonathan's commitment to David as a friend. But before we go any further, might I just draw the brief point here that we have to have a noble commitment to Jesus Christ.

That oftentimes our Savior is despised and rejected and mocked among men of this earth. And sometimes we need to identify ourselves and suffer some embarrassment and suffer some pain and suffer some rejection because we're going to align ourselves with a rejected Savior. May none of us ever faint from that.

May none of us ever flinch from it. And as the arrow went on, it gave such a big message, such a big message from such a small, single arrow. It told David that his whole life was changed.

He's no longer welcome at the palace. He's no longer welcome among the army of Israel. He's no longer safe in his own home.

David now knew that he'd have to live as an outcast, as a fugitive on the run from an angry, jealous king determined to destroy him. You know, friends, that sometimes our lives can turn on a small thing. One night of carelessness can change a girl's life forever.

One night with the wrong crowd can give someone a rest record or a time in jail or prison that they'll regret the rest of their lives. It oftentimes does not seem fair that such great things in our life can turn on such small moments, but that's the way it is. After all, what is your life? My life.

Our lives are just a collection of small moments put together. Things have to turn on some hinge. That's why we need to be vigilant, diligent every day of our life because you never know on what small moment today the rest of your future may hinge upon.

If I only wouldn't have gone out that night, if I only wouldn't have gone behind the wheel that night, if only I would have been doing this or only if I would have been doing that instead. How many times we've said it. Friends, remember, your life may hinge on a small moment, a small decision that you're faced with today.

Then the chapter concludes in 41 and 42. The picture is powerful. Look at it there.

It says, Now, as soon as the lad had gone, David arose from a place toward the south, fell on his face to the ground and bowed down three times. They kissed one another and they wept together with David more so. Then Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, since we both sworn in the name of the Lord, saying, May the Lord be between you and me and between your descendants and my descendants forever.

So he arose and departed and Jonathan went into the city. They wept together. David and Jonathan loved each other and they had a strong bond of friendship.

But David couldn't stay and Jonathan couldn't go. And they remembered their bond of friendship that we saw way back in 1 Samuel chapter 18 when Jonathan gave David his armor and he gave David his princely robe. It was Jonathan's way of saying, David, I recognize that you are God's choice to be the next king, not me.

I'll lay aside my right to the throne and help you to take it. This armor of a prince and this robe of a prince, it belongs to you now, not to me. That's what Jonathan said to David.

I'm sure Jonathan and David envisioned working together. Yeah, up until the time you become king, we can be captains together in the Lord's army and you'll fight on this flank and I'll fight on this flank and when the battle's over, we'll come together and we'll just celebrate and we'll just enjoy, we'll tell stories. And then David, well, what about when I'm king? Oh, how great it's going to be! I'll be your counselor, I'll be your advisor, David.

Anything you want. And Jonathan and David talking back and forth about how great it'll be, these great, super wonderful friends together and talking about the wonderful times that they've had and that they will have. Now, it's gone.

So they weep together. Jonathan and David will only see each other once more their entire lives, shortly before Jonathan's death. But if it was sad for both of them, did you see the end of verse 41? But David more so.

I mean, it was hard for both of them. They couldn't be with each other, they couldn't enjoy their friendship anymore. But it was worse for David because he was cut off from everything and he was destined to live for many years as a fugitive.

Friends, it's like the sunny day is behind him and in front of him are the lowering dark clouds of a storm. It's like all the blessings of friendship and his wife and his home and his royal favor and all the popular praise, all that's behind him. In front of him is the life of an outcast, a criminal and a fugitive.

So all Jonathan can say is, verse 42, Go in peace since we've both sworn in the name of the Lord. You know, I think we can conclude this for seeing two remarkable things. One in the life of Jonathan and one in the life of David.

First of all, about Jonathan, isn't it amazing? Isn't it just absolutely striking in Jonathan? That this man, Jonathan, is so godly. I mean, what an incredibly godly man this is. Our hearts just kind of leap when we think of Jonathan.

This is truly like the dynamic duo of the Old Testament, David and Jonathan together. Wow, I mean, what a combination. Then it got me to thinking, well, then it almost doesn't make sense.

I mean, I thought I had it figured out. Saul was rejected as king because he was ungodly and God wanted a godly king. So that's easy.

Saul's ungodly. David's godly. Kick Saul out.

Put the godly David in. Great. And then I look at Jonathan and I scratch my head.

Wait a minute. Jonathan's godly. I mean, if it was that simple, why wouldn't God just take Saul off the throne and as everybody would expect, let Jonathan take his place? Because it's true that Jonathan and David were both godly, but David was God's choice.

Why? He was a man after God's own heart. It wasn't that Jonathan wasn't. But God chose David.

Why? Why? I don't know. Ask God. That's how it is with a lot of things in our lives.

Second thing I want you to see is, finally, look at verse 42, where it says of David, he rose and departed. David will not return to normal life until Saul is dead and David is king. Friends, we're talking 10, 15 years from this point.

There's a very bleak road in front of David. As we look upon it, we look at David walking away, maybe jogging. He has to get away.

His life is in danger. We scratch our heads. Wait a minute.

Was David in God's will here? I mean, come on. If you're in God's will, you wouldn't be walking such a bleak road, would you? God often has His people spend some time on that bleak road. Matter of fact, He appoints some of His favorites to spend a lot of time on it.

Many times, if God will especially use a man or a woman, He'll have them spend an extra long time on that bleak road. You want some examples? About Job. About Joseph.

About Moses. About Paul. I could go on and on, but you get the idea.

See, the bleak road was important in David's life because if God will put David in a place where people have to depend on Him, God's going to teach David to depend on God alone. That's what the wilderness will teach him. The bleak road's important because in David's life, if David's going to be safe now and promoted to king later, David has to learn how to let God be his defense and God be his promoter.

The bleak road's important in David's life because if David is going to be put in a position of great authority, and king is a position of great authority, David has to learn how to submit to God's authority,

even when that authority is in the hands of a wicked man like Saul. My friends, David could have said, I'm not going anywhere. Let's get it on right now.

I've got friends. I've got people loyal to me. Let's get whoever's on my side, whoever's on Saul's side, and let's have a civil war.

I'm not waiting for the throne. I'm taking it. David could have said that, my friends, but he didn't.

He submitted to God's authority, even when it was invested in the hands of a man like Saul. He submitted to Saul's authority. He trusted the Lord.

He walked out on that bleak road. Friends, it was the sheepfold, the pasture lands, that made David a man after God's own heart. But it was the bleak road of the rugged Judean wilderness that made him a king.

And that's where David's headed out for. Let me close with this quote from Alan Redpath. Let God empty you out that He may save you from becoming spiritually stale and lead you ever onward.

He's always calling us to pass beyond the thing we know into the unknown. A throne is God's purpose for you. A cross is God's path for you.

Faith is God's plan for you. Let's pray and ask the Lord to do that work deep in our hearts. Father, together this morning we rejoice in Your purpose, in Your path, in Your plan for us.

Lord, just like You made David a king from the time on that bleak road in the wilderness, Lord, You've destined us for a throne, and so You've got a similar work to do in our lives. Help us to trust You and love You in the midst of it, God. And I don't know if I'm speaking to people this morning, Lord, helping them to understand something they've gone through before, helping them to get through something they're going through right now, or helping them to prepare for something You're going to have ahead of them.

Lord, let this sink deeply down into our hearts. Give us the heart of David to trust You even in the unknown before us. We love You.

We praise You. We give You honor this morning, Lord, in Jesus' name.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/10/SID10649.mp3>

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