

(2 Samuel) Believing and Living

by David Guzik

David's family life and leadership are examined in light of God's plan for marriage and kingship, highlighting the importance of invitation and commitment in the reign of Jesus Christ in our lives.

Duration: 37:36

Scripture: 2 Samuel 2:22, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Faith And Action", "Obedience To God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker encourages the audience to yield their lives to God and take action in following His calling. They emphasize the importance of not delaying in doing what God is asking of us, using the example of the angels who immediately obey God's commands. The speaker also highlights the richness and depth of the Bible as both the word of God and great literature, with real and complex characters. They discuss the story of Abner, David, and Joab, emphasizing the messiness that can come with doing God's work but also the importance of taking action and doing what we can in difficult situations.

Transcript

Let's begin now at verse one. Now there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David, but David grew stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker. Well, this is the verse with which we concluded last week, noting at how there was this great civil war between David and the rival for the throne, King Ish-bosheth.

I feel awkward even saying King Ish-bosheth, because I don't even think we should regard him as a king. He was a pretender to the throne. He was a man who had no business sitting upon the throne of Israel.

Yet, for a strange reason, the majority of Israel followed him. You see, David was anointed as king while Saul was still on the throne, and David left it up to the Lord to get Saul out of that position, and then David figured, well, when Saul's gone, then I'll move in. And eventually, through a lot of tragedy and many years of pressure and trial upon David, Saul died on the field of battle, and only one of the twelve tribes of Israel embraced David as king.

Isn't that funny? Not twelve of them, only one of them. And the eleven tribes stuck out of habit, out of carnality, I don't know what, they stuck with this descendant of Saul, this pretender to the throne, Ish-bosheth. And there was this long, protracted war.

Well, David had his headquarters in the city of Hebron among the tribe of Judah. Take a look at it here, verse 2. Sons were born to David in Hebron. His firstborn was Amnon, by Ehanom, the Jezreelitess.

His second, Chilia, by Abigail, the widow of Nabal, the Carmelite. The third, Absalom, the son of Machah, of the daughter of Tamalai, the king of Geshur. The fourth, Adoniaah, the son of Haggith.

The fifth, Shaphathiah, the son of Abital. And the sixth, Ithriam, by David's wife, Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron.

Well, you read that list, and not only are the names complicated, and you really don't know if I pronounced them right or not. And I don't know either, really. But what's notable about that is you have six different sons to David.

And you say, well, isn't that great? Six sons. Well, it's a large family, but it's not huge. I mean, that's the thing.

Then you notice six sons by what? Six different wives. And you say, what's going on here? Well, for good reason, you ask what's going on. How could this man of God, this man after God's own heart, David, how could he have six wives? Well, it was wrong.

David was wrong to have more than one wife. You know, God specifically commanded the kings of Israel in Deuteronomy 17, verse 17, that they should not multiply wives unto themselves. And it also violated not only God's specific command, but it violated God's heart for marriage, which was revealed from the very first time that he spoke about marriage in the Old Testament.

In Genesis chapter two, where he said that it was God's plan from the beginning that one man should be joined with one woman and the two should come together in what's known as a one flesh relationship. Not one man with six women. And so David was was wrong.

Now we understand that this was a common practice in the ancient world, that it was common for a great man, especially a king, to add many wives to himself. It was sort of an expression of his grandeur, of his greatness, perhaps even of his virility. And so it was, well, look at what a great man he is.

But it doesn't matter if it was common among the kings all surrounding David. It was wrong. I find it fascinating that oftentimes we think that the Bible should be more preachy than it really is.

And many of us say, well, you know, verse six here, right after verse five, well, it tells us about six sons born of six different wives. We suspect that verse six should say, and the Lord God of heaven was verily displeased with David and his six wives. It doesn't say that, does it? It passes over it without comment.

And some of us wonder, what's wrong with that? Well, you know, the Bible isn't as preachy as many people think it is. Oftentimes it just lays it out. This is what happened.

And it expects you to take a look at the text and see what happened. It expects you to take a look at the family life of David and to see whether it was blessed or whether it was troubled, to see what the fruit was of David's six wives. Excuse me, because actually it was a great deal more than six.

David will add several otherwise. He'll add another wife before we're done with this chapter here. Well, ask yourself, was the family life of David blessed or was it troubled? Let me give you one indication here.

And it's telling us this right here in the text. Six sons, you say, well, that's a lot. You know what? Not if you have six wives.

These were not very fruitful wombs, were they? And this is a commentary. You're supposed to pick this up from the text. Let me give you another indicator here.

You just look at these names and see what happened to these men as they grew up. You have Amnon, the oldest. Well, there's a sterling character.

He raped his half-sister and he was murdered by his half-brother. And then you have three unknown folks, the second-born Tiliab and Sethia and Ithrium. We only have one other mention of these men, one other place in the Scriptures.

Maybe they died young. Maybe they were so ungodly or unworthy that there was no point in even mentioning again, except in one other place in the Scriptures. And then you have Absalom.

Well, he murdered his half-brother and he led a civil war against his father David and he tried to kill his father David. And then you have Adoniah. Well, he tried to seize the throne from David and from David's appointed successor.

And then he tried to take one of David's concubines and he was executed for his arrogance. Well, here's your troubled family life right here. Because David stepped out of God's plan for marriage.

Well, we'll have much more to say on that through the book of 2 Samuel. But let's take a look at what happens in this struggle between David and the rival king, the pretender to the throne, Ishbosheth. Now, it was so while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David that Abner was strengthening his hold on the house of Saul.

And Saul had a concubine whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah. So Ishbosheth said to Abner, why have you gone into my father's concubine? Well, it's hard sometimes to keep track of the characters here in the narrative. But let's just do a little review.

You have David, the great godly king that God has anointed and wants to rule over Israel. The man who will become the greatest king that Israel has ever known. And I say that to the present day.

Accepting, of course, the great son of David, Jesus Christ himself. Then we have the rival, the pretender to the throne, Ishbosheth. Then you have Ishbosheth's general, the head of his military department.

And this is this man, Abner. Now keep another name in mind. We'll get to it a little bit later on.

Joab. That's David's chief military man. So you have David and his chief military man, Joab.

You have Ishbosheth and his chief military man, Abner. Now, Ishbosheth was a weak, worthless man. Abner, well, he was a man's man, a real general, a military man.

And Abner was the real power behind the throne. As a matter of fact, it was Abner who had propped up Ishbosheth into power so that Abner could be the real power. And Ishbosheth was a weak man, a little puppet he could pull on the strings.

And as time goes on, Abner wants to increase his strength more and more. And then we have what I call the Rizpah incident. That's what the headlines would read.

You know, Rizpah Gates, the Rizpah scandal. Abner is accused of having relations with a former concubine of Saul's. You might say, well, what's the big deal? Saul's dead after all.

So what if a man has relations with a widow of someone who's dead? It wasn't properly a widow because it was a concubine, but you get the idea. You know, there was a principle among the kings of the ancient world. And the principle was once you are joined to a king, you belong to him forever.

And it doesn't matter if the king dies. So once this concubine was joined to King Saul, that concubine belonged to Saul forever. And it would be wrong for another man to take that concubine, even if Saul was dead.

By the way, just by a quick analogy, don't you think that principle applies to Jesus and his bride? Once you belong to him, you belong to him. If you're part of his bride, you've got no business being joined to anybody else. You're his.

Might I say in passing, that's why some of you are miserable today. You're miserable because you've made a commitment to Jesus in your life, but you're playing around with the things of the world. You're cheating on your husband, as it were.

Jesus, your groom, your husband, and you're not being faithful to him in your heart and in your life. And so you're in that classic dilemma. You've got too much of Jesus in you to be happy in the world, but you've got too much of the world in you to be happy in Jesus.

You know, it was better when you were just a rank sinner. You could be happier then. Your conscience didn't bother you so much.

Your heart wasn't awakened to the things of God. And you could do your thing, and it just didn't bother you the same way. But now you've got Jesus in you, and he's not letting go of you, is he? But yet your worldliness makes it to where you really can't be happy in the things of God.

Friends, there's only one solution for you. An all-out, abandoned commitment to Jesus Christ. That's the only place where you're really going to be happy and fulfilled.

Well, in any regard, there was this whole dispute, this whole argument here between Abner and Ishbosheth. By the way, the text never really tells us whether or not the accusation was true, just that it was laid out there. But here's Abner's reply in verse 8. Then Abner became very angry at the words of Ishbosheth and said, Am I a dog's head that belongs to Judah? Today I show loyalty to the house of Saul, your father, to his brothers and to his friends, and have not delivered you into the hand of David, and you charge me today with a fault concerning this woman? May God do so to Abner, and more also, if I do not do for David as the Lord has sworn to him, to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan to Beersheba.

And he could not answer Abner another word because he feared him. So Ishbosheth brings the accusation to Abner, and Abner says, Are you talking to me? Are you dreaming? You're going to accuse me of this? By the way, I still don't say that I know whether or not the accusation is true or not. It could be true, and maybe Abner was just so offended that Ishbosheth would call him on it.

Or maybe it was false, and his pride is rightly found. I don't know. One way or the other, Abner says, Listen, Ishbosheth, I'm having nothing to do with you anymore.

I'm going over to the team of David. I'm not going to support you, you pretend rival king, one bit longer. I'm going over to the true king, the one that God had appointed.

And on the one hand, we want to stand up and applaud and give Abner an ovation here. Abner, you're finally doing the right thing. Abner, you're not going to support the rival king anymore.

You're going to support God's choice, David. And then on the other hand, we look at what Abner says. Did you notice it there? Abner says it right here.

It's in verse, I don't want to miss the verse, so let me get it for you exactly. It's in verse eight, no, excuse me, verse nine, where he says, May God do so to Abner, and more also, if I do not do for David, as the Lord has sworn to him to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah. In other words, Abner knew that God had promised to give David the kingdom.

I would say, well, good for you, Abner. No, bad for you, Abner. What was in Abner's head all those years? He supported Ispachet all along, knowing that God's hand was on David to be the rightful king.

You see, if Abner knew that David was God's choice for king, why did he fight against him before? Abner is a great example to us of those of us who know things to be true, but we don't live them to be true. What a difference they can be between believing and living. Abner, has God appointed David rightful king over all Israel? Well, yes, he has.

Abner, why are you supporting the rightful king, Ispachet? Well, you know, man, I've got to earn a living, and this guy's offered me a job to be chief of staff, and you know how all the excuses can flow, right? Isn't it interesting how we can do that? We can have this mental disconnect. Oh, Jesus, you're Lord, and I know you want to be, and you should be Lord over everything in my life. Yes, Lord, yes, Lord, yes.

And then Jesus says, well, I want you to give this to me in your life. Well, no, Lord, you know, that's out of the question. Can we move on to something else? It's interesting.

This disconnect we can have between believing and living. But there's also something else curious about Abner's newfound commitment to David. It is that he's doing the right thing, but he's doing it, wouldn't we honestly say, for the wrong reason? Why is Abner motivated to come over to David? Because he says, well, David's the king, and I'm going to serve him, and this is what God wants.

No, Ispachet hurt my feelings. And so I'm going over to David now. Now, we applaud him for doing the right thing, but it was for the wrong reason.

It was all about Abner. You know, this is very common. If you want to relate it to the way that we come to Jesus.

Very commonly, we come to Jesus initially for selfish reasons. Oh, God, save my marriage. Oh, God, save my child.

Oh, God, save my business or save my financial state. Whatever the case may be, save my hurting heart. You know, God will not refuse you when you come to him for selfish reasons.

But shouldn't it grow beyond that? Shouldn't it grow to the place where then you come and you give your life to Jesus Christ? Well, because he's your creator and he's your redeemer and it's for his glory. Where it's not all about you. It's not all about me.

It's all about Jesus himself. Well, look at what David responds with here in verse 12. Then Abner sent messengers on his behalf to David, saying, Whose is the land? Saying also, make your covenant with me.

And indeed, my hand shall be with you to bring all Israel to you. And David said, good, I'll make a covenant with you. But one thing I require of you.

You shall not see my face unless you first bring Michael, Saul's daughter. When you come to see my face. So David sent messengers to Ishbosheth, Saul's son, saying, Give me my wife, Michael, whom I betrothed to myself for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines.

We get the point here, don't you? They're saying, Abner, fine, you can come, but not unless you bring with me Michael. You say, no, wait a minute, David. Do you really need wife number seven? You know, in David's mind, he did.

It's kind of curious and twisted in a way. But if there was any one person who was David's rightful wife, it was this one. This was wife number one taken away from David by King Saul.

When David was put in that place where Saul thought David was his enemy. And Saul, in an effort to destroy and discourage David as part of the attack, he took away his own daughter, whose name was Michael, and took her away from David and gave her unto another man. And David says, this was a wrong done to me, and it needs to be set right.

You know, I also think that there's another reason why David did this. It was because he knows he's going to take the throne, and this gave him a legitimate connection to the throne. He was the son of the former king, the son-in-law, but nevertheless, still the son of the former king.

And so he tells Abner, well, listen, you're not coming back unless you bring her with you. And so Abner does it. And take a look here, verse 15.

Abner's a tough guy. All he has to do is confront this fellow and say, well, forget it. Your time is done with this woman.

She's going back to her rightful husband. And she did. Verse 17.

There's some fascinating things here in those three verses. First of all, we find Abner promoting David's reign over the tribes of Israel. Now again, one tribe had already agreed David you be king.

The other 11 tribes had not yet so agreed. And Abner, now that he's come over to David's side, might we say it's Abner the evangelist going around telling people, submit to King David, forget about Ish-bosheth. Now what I think is interesting about this is Abner is doing this and not David.

David wasn't into self-promotion. David wasn't going to take a campaign all over Israel saying, make me your king, support me as king. And David was not going to force it upon Israel either.

Don't you think David had every right, every right to go to those tribal leaders and say, listen, Ish-bosheth, he's out, I'm in, I'm the rightful king, I'm anointed, I'm called of God. That's all there is to it. I'm not taking

any more of this nonsense.

I'm the king, Ish-bosheth's not. You submit or die. Don't you think David had every right to do that? But David would not.

David would not move an inch without invitation. I think it's fascinating that Jesus Christ was the genetic descendant of many great Bible people. Obviously, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and the genetic descendant of David as well.

Do you realize that Jesus is never really given the title son of Abraham or son of Noah or son of Isaac? But he is given the title son of David. Because in so many ways, the reign of David over Israel is a picture of the reign of Jesus Christ over our life. And David would not advance an inch over the people of God except by invitation.

And isn't that how Jesus reigns in our life? You know, he has every right to do it by force. But no, he wants an invitation. As it says in the book of Revelation, chapter three, Jesus speaking to his church, to his people, not in an evangelistic way, but speaking to his people.

He says, behold, I stand at the door and knock. Well, there's Jesus outside the door of the believer knocking. Says, you open up the door.

Now, some of us are waiting for Jesus to come in like a SWAT team. You know, burst down the door, flooding in, taking over everything. Jesus says, no, no, no.

I will stand at the door and knock. It's up to you to open up the door and to let me in. Where's Jesus knocking at your heart today? How just is the personal relationship you have with Jesus? Is your time of prayer sweet? Is it refreshing? Is it a beautiful thing in your life? If not, the dryness of it is a way that Jesus is knocking at your heart.

You see, in so many ways, Jesus knocks and he says, you let me in here. And some of us, we don't want Jesus to rule over anything. And some of us, we invite Jesus.

We say, OK, Jesus, you can rule over Hebron. Just that. That's fine.

Over this small area, that's great. But you know what Jesus says? He says, I want to rule over everything. And just like David, he wouldn't advance an inch by anything else but invitation.

Now, maybe the exhortation of Abner is what we need to hear this morning. Take a look at verse 17. Now, Abner had communicated with the elders of Israel saying, in time past you were seeking for David to be king over you.

Now, then do it. Do it. Now's the time.

What delays you? What delays you from embracing David as king completely? Nothing. It's just up to you. Now do it.

And isn't that the word of urgency that some of us need to hear this morning? You know, let's just say five years ago, your commitment with the Lord was sort of half-hearted. And your walk with the Lord. I mean, yeah, I'm a Christian.

I'm going to heaven. But you know, it was a half-hearted commitment to God. Let's just say five years ago.

And if I were to come up to you five years ago and say, you know what? In five years, you're going to be stuck in the same half-hearted place. Well, you'd get mad at me. No way.

No, I'm not going to be like this forever. I know I'm here now. But you know, it's just a season in my life.

And believe me, someday I'm going to get it all right with God. And that was five years ago. And today, you may still be in that same half-hearted place.

Do you see Abner's exhortation? Now, then, do it. I mean, what's holding you back? You do it now. Well, this exhortation that he gave to the people of Israel, they responded.

Look at it here, verse 19. And Abner also spoke in the hearing of Benjamin. Then Abner also went to speak in the hearing of David in Hebron.

All that seemed good to Israel and the whole house of Benjamin. So Abner and twenty men with him came to David at Hebron. And David made a feast for Abner and the men who were with him.

And then Abner said to David, I'll arise and go and gather all Israel to my lord the king, that they may make a covenant with you and that you may reign over all that your heart desires. So David sent Abner away and he went in peace. That's a beautiful scene, isn't it? Abner, the former adversary.

What a generous man David was. This was a man who had battled against him in war. But now that he's turned over to his side, David doesn't say, well, I'm going to make you pay for a few years.

He opens his arm wide, says, I'm a generous man. I'll forgive you, Abner. Come on, let's have a feast together, Abner.

And he receives him with a great feast. And there they are. They're enjoying their time together.

Abner's totally restored into the graces of David. It seems like a wonderful scene, doesn't it? Until you get to verse 22. Let me repeat some comments that I made first service.

I trust they're appropriate, but, you know, I'm just struck at what a wonderful, wonderful book the Bible is. Not merely, I shouldn't even say merely, not only as the word of God given to us, but what great literature it is. These people are real.

These characters are three dimensional. They're not the flat, pale characters that screenwriters and scriptwriters write about today. Oh, these are real people.

And in this whole complex struggle between Abner and David and Ishbosheth, now Joab comes into the scene. You remember Joab? Joab, David's chief general? Joab, whose brother was murdered by, well, I wouldn't say murdered. I'd say killed on the field of battle.

Let's say that. Whose brother was killed on the field of battle at the hands of Abner. Verse 22.

At that moment, the servants of David and Joab came from a raid and brought much spoil with them. But Abner was not with David in Hebron, for he had sent him away and he had gone in peace. When Joab and all the troops that were with him had come, they told Joab, saying, Abner, the son of Ner, came to the king and he sent him away and he's gone in peace.

Well, put yourself in Joab's sandals. You come back from a victorious raid. You got a lot of spoil.

Everybody's happy when you come into town. Hey, Joab's here. He's been successful on the field of battle.

Everybody's glad to see him. Then somebody comes up to you. Joab, well, let me tell you something.

You know who was just here? Abner. Abner. When Joab hears Abner, he thinks of one thing.

That's the man who killed my brother. So Joab says, Abner was here. Well, surely, surely David locked him up in prison.

No, Abner came and David threw him a feast and sent him away in peace. And Joab is fuming. That's the man who killed my brother.

Now, Joab is a man who was a warrior and a mighty man himself. But he should have thought about it. He should have said, you know, Abner killed my brother when my brother was trying to kill him.

Abner killed my brother on the field of battle. And I don't have to like it, but it wasn't anything disgraceful or shameful in Abner. In any regard, verse 24.

Then Joab came to the king and said, what have you done? Look, Abner came to you. Why is it that you send him away and he's already gone? Surely you realize that Abner, the son of Ner, came to deceive you and to know you're going out. You're coming in and to know all that you're doing.

He's a spy, David. You better wake up to it. After all, this is the man who killed my brother.

There can be nothing good in him. And when Joab had gone from David and from David's presence, he sent messengers after Abner who brought him back from the well of Sarah. But David did not know it.

Now, when Abner had returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him privately. And there stabbed him in the stomach so that he died for the blood of Asahel, his brother. So, David, you're going to receive this man, Abner.

Yes, I will. David, you think he's on our side now? Yes, I think he's on our side now. And Joab says, no, no, no, I will not accept this.

He sends a message to Abner. Abner, come and meet me. We're fellow military men.

We'll have a little talk. Let bygones be bygones. Abner gets the message.

I don't know what to do with this. This Joab fellow goes, well, I'll do it. You know, David is his king and David's reigning over this.

And so there he comes and he returns and he meets him right outside the gate. And you know how it would go. Abner would be a little bit nervous, but he sees Joab walking towards him.

He's a big smile on Joab's face. Abner, Abner, my friend. And it sort of puts Abner's heart a little more at ease.

And as they come together, perhaps or maybe even probably, in that traditional way of greeting one another in that culture, the men would give a little embrace on each side of the face. And just as they're close there, Joab takes out a dagger and he stabs Abner with it. In the movie that's in my head, he sort of twists it around a little bit.

Maybe whispers in his ear, that's for my brother. The body of Abner falls to the ground and his blood drains into the dirt. That was wrong.

Joab had no business doing that. You see what unforgiveness can do. You see how the bitterness that you can't let go of can take a hold of your heart.

And you'd never murder the person with the sword, but you do it with your tongue. You do it with your attitude. You do it with whatever weapons you can lay a hold of.

Poor David, how would you like to have these guys working for you? But it wasn't David's fault. David didn't see this coming. This was a huge mess, perhaps a scandal in David's kingdom.

Can you hear the calls? David, you couldn't protect this man who came over to help you. David, is this what happens to people who become your friends? David, what's going on with this? So what does David do? Verse 28, afterwards, when David heard it, he said, My kingdom and I are guiltless before the Lord forever of the blood of Abner, the son of Ner. Let it rest on the head of Joab and on all his father's house.

And let there never fail to be in the house of Joab one who has a discharge, who is a leper or who leans on a staff or falls by the sword or who lacks bread. So Joab and Abishai, his brother, killed Abner because he had killed their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle. I ask your indulgence that I won't read the rest of the verses in this chapter.

It describes the touching funeral that they had for Abner and how David legitimately and passionately mourned the death of this man who late in his life had become David's friend but was murdered in great treachery. It's a big mess and I wonder if David didn't feel like giving up. I can't do anything around here, David said.

What's going on with this? I mean, I can't keep these guys in line and who knows what Joab's going to do next. You know, kind of a curious verse came to mind when I was thinking about this. Proverbs, chapter 14, verse 4. It says, Where no oxen are, the trough is clean, but much increase comes by the strength of an ox.

You know, the point of that verse is really, when you're going to get things done, there's going to be messes along the way. Where you have the oxen in the stall, there's going to be a mess. No doubt about it.

You're going to have to clean up after that oxen. But, a lot of work gets done through the strength of an ox. I guess the lesson is, if you never ever want to have any messes, then you'll never do anything for God.

David did what he could. He fixed the situation. He did the very best that he could in the situation, even though Abner was still dead and Joab was still in power.

But I think maybe we should hear the lesson of Abner to us. Did you remember that from verse 18? Now then do it. Is God speaking to your heart about something in your life? Something to step out into.

A prayer you've been praying, a decision you need to make, a yielding you have to give. Now then do it. As I prayed for this morning's message, it was very much impressed upon my heart.

That this is something for you to hear this morning. Not only for you to hear, but for you to speak to others this week. I mean, in my mind's eye, I picture that God will give you opportunities this week.

For you to press home upon the point that people that you meet, that it's time for them to do something about what God is doing in their life. So over the water cooler, or over the dinner table, or over the school books with somebody else, you will have the opportunity to press that point home with somebody. Well, you've been thinking about making a decision for Jesus Christ.

Now then do it. What better time is there going to be than today? Well, you've been thinking about yielding this area of your life to God. Now then do it.

It's a message for you to hear and to apply, no doubt, in your own life. But you know, God hasn't just brought you here this morning for your good, but for the good of lives that you will touch this week as his messenger. So would you look for opportunities this week? Would you have your spiritual antenna raised this week? God, what opportunity will you give me to share this message? To press this point home upon somebody, not just in my own life, but for somebody else as well.

I think sometimes the angels in heaven are amazed at how we delay to do what God is calling us to do. The angels do what God wants them to do instantly. That's why we usually picture them with wings, because they're fast in their activity.

God says it and they do it. We need to learn that kind of obedience, don't we? It's not inborn in us. Look at your children.

First time obedience is something that you have to train in them. Generally speaking, they're not born with it. Oh, God, teach us this great principle.

Let's pray together. Father, that is our prayer. We long for it to be impressed upon our own lives.

Lord, I trust that you're speaking to hearts this morning. Lord, I have no one application to make of this, because your application is being spoken in the hearts of your people now by the eloquence of the Holy Spirit. Lord, I pray that at whatever specific point you're speaking to our life, that we would heed it and have a sense of urgency about it to now then do it.

We're tired of delaying the full reign of Jesus over our lives. Lord, we want it to be full and true right now in us. No more waiting for tomorrow or five years from now.

We want it now, God. So we yield to you now. But, Father, we pray, too, that you would anoint us as messengers of this.

We believe, God, that you will give a special opportunity this week. If we'll just be open for it, Lord, nothing that we'll have to force. You will bring us the opportunity if we will but be sensitive to it.

And, God, give us the grace to be faithful in that moment when you give us the opportunity. We love you, Lord. Thank you, King Jesus, Son of David.

Reign in our life. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Let's stand together. May the Lord bless you and keep you and make his face to shine upon you.

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