

David

[5th Edition – June 2010]

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The calling of God

Lesson 1

A. Introduction

Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13

All in Christ have a calling.

1. We are called first of all into His salvation. Romans 8:30.
2. Secondly, we are all called into His service. Everyone has a service to do in God's kingdom. Ephesians 4:16.

As we study David's calling as leader of all Israel, we will learn some valuable lessons in fulfilling the service God has called us to.

B. God does the calling

Read 1 Samuel 16:1

1. It was God who called David to be king over His people Israel.

Other people might have desired to be king, or Samuel might have thought that somebody else would make a good king, but God had one person whom He had called to that specific task. It would have been fruitless for anybody but David to try to be king.

2. Yet that is what many people try to do in the church today. They desire places of service in the church that God never called them to. To do so only brings frustration.

It is no use trying to be an apostle if God has called you to be a deacon. Striving after something God has not called you to will actually rob you of the energy needed to fulfil the service you are called to.

Remember God is in charge and we have surrendered ourselves to His lordship to do His will. Jeremiah 10:23.

3. God's blessing will be upon us and on the church, when each of us finds the place and task God has called us to and when we do it whole-heartedly.

C. God confirms His call

Read 1 Samuel 16:2-3

1. God showed Samuel whom He wanted in the position of king.

David did not have to try to convince anyone that he was called to be king. God

had already shown the leadership of the day who was to take that position.

2. We can trust God to confirm to others, especially the leadership in the church, the calling that He has for us.

If God can speak to Cyrus, an ungodly king, and to Balaam, a spiritualist priest, He can certainly speak to the leaders of His church. Isaiah 44:28, Numbers 22:32.

3. The Bible says that a man's gift makes way for him. Proverbs 18:16. God is able to open the door into whatever service He has called us.

Others will recognize God's anointing upon us for the service He has called us to, and they will accept our ministry.

D. God looks at the heart

Read 1 Samuel 16:4-10

1. Notice that God's calling is not according to the standards of this world.

Verse 6. Samuel's natural inclination was to choose Eliab, because he looked like a leader. Verse 7. But God shows us what is more important to Him: **He is concerned with the heart**. As if to emphasise this point, God allowed Samuel to go through all of the seemingly natural choices before showing Samuel His choice: the smallest, most insignificant of Jesse's sons who was not even invited to the meeting – but who had the right heart.

Read 1 Corinthians 1:27-29

2. Many times God will call us to do what we know we do not have the ability to do, in order to show His grace and power through us.

Moses protested that he did not have the ability to speak, but God eventually made him His mouthpiece and a great leader over all Israel. Exodus 4:10.

The poor, uneducated disciples did not seem to have the right qualifications but in God's power they started a revival that touched the whole world.

We may not think that we are qualified to do what God is calling us to do, but God delights in using the seemingly foolish things of this world to confound the wisdom of the world.

3. That is not to say that God is against us obtaining all of the training that we can for the task that He is calling us to.

E. God's standard for calling has not changed

Read 2 Timothy 2:20-22

1. The qualifications that God was looking for in David, are the same qualifications

that He is looking for in us today: He is looking for hearts that are pure and set apart in devotion to Him.

2. Through consecrated lives God can move in power and show Himself to the world.
3. People make great sacrifices to obtain the qualifications necessary for the career of their choice.

Illustration: A person who wants to become a doctor will go to university for many years and study long hours at great expense. On top of all of the time spent in classes and study, he may also have to work at a number of part-time jobs while at university. Then, for many years, he has to spend long hours working in a hospital so as to obtain practical experience before he can finally become a doctor. After all of this training he must continue to be trained in new medical developments if he wants to be effective in his work.

How much more should we be willing to make whatever sacrifices are needed to ensure that we have the right qualification for God's work – a right heart. Proverbs 4:23.

F. God is preparing us

Read 1 Samuel 16:11

1. David was first a shepherd boy learning to be responsible in tending sheep before he could later on tend to God's flock. Psalm 78:70-72. After that he served in Saul's court and in his army.
2. We need to understand that there is a process that God will take us through before we are ready for that which He has called us to do.

Moses was in Pharaoh's court for forty years and then in the desert for forty years before he took the place of leadership that God had called him to.

God may have spoken to you about something that He wants you to do in His kingdom – like David and Joseph who were called by God at a young age – but, just as God took these men through a preparation process, so He will take you through a process too.

3. We should not be impatient with what God is asking us to do now, or distracted by the promotion of others.

We must be confident in what we know God has called us to do, and trust Him to work everything that is necessary, such as diligence, faithfulness and ability to handle greater responsibility, into our lives before we can take the place He has called us to.

If we try to run ahead of God's preparation process, we will not be able to handle the things that God wants us to do in the future.

G. With the call comes the ability

Read 1 Samuel 16:12-13

1. God anointed David to be king over Israel. David might have desired some other task, e.g. to be a priest or to stay a shepherd, but God's anointing was for him to be king.

Some other person might have tried to be king, but there would have been no blessing because God had called, anointed and equipped David for that service.

2. Let us not compare ourselves to others but rather find out what God wants *us* to do in His kingdom.
3. When we find what God wants us to do, we will find God's power available for the task, when we give ourselves to it whole-heartedly.

Memory Verse

1 Samuel 16:7, *"The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart".*

Teacher's Notes

Some questions to ask to help people find their calling:

1. Has God spoken to you in some way to show you what His call is upon your life?
2. How has God confirmed this to you?
3. Has God used others, especially those in leadership, to confirm this call?
4. What area of ministry really touches your heart? Be sure it is your heart and not just your head.
5. In what area of ministry do you find God giving you His ability?
6. Are others making room for your ministry and is your ministry bearing good fruit in the lives of others?
7. What steps are you taking to prepare yourself for the ministry you believe God has called you to?
8. Have you allowed things to come into your heart that will hinder you being effective in your ministry? If so repent now and ask God to give you a pure heart.

The power of praise

Lesson 2

A. Introduction

Read 1 Samuel 16:14-23

1. Because Saul turned away from God he opened himself up to demonic influence – an evil spirit that tormented him greatly.

Saul was trying to accomplish God's work without God's power. That is a very dangerous thing to do.

2. When we do the work of the kingdom of light we will come up against the powers of the kingdom of darkness. Ephesians 6:12.

It is only in God's power that we can stand against the powers of darkness. We have to submit ourselves to God before we attempt to resist the devil. James 4:7.

In this story God shows us a powerful weapon against demonic powers. 2 Corinthians 10:4. Whenever David sang praises to God the evil spirit had to flee.

The Bible shows us that there is tremendous power in praise which enables us to walk in the victory of God in our lives. Praise can bring release to others through us.

B. David knew the power of praise

Read Psalm 8:2

1. David was a young boy tending sheep on the hillside who had learned the power of praise from a young age. As he worked with the sheep, he would take up his harp and sing new songs of praise to the Lord.
2. Praise is not only for when we are in church, because the enemy does not attack us only when we are in church. He can attack believers at any time with doubt, fear, sickness, discouragement, etc. That is the time to put the power of praise into effect, like David, and silence the attack of the enemy.
3. As we praise and sing about the victory of God in our lives, faith rises in our hearts and the power of God's presence is released, because praise is the way into God's presence. Psalm 100:4. The enemy cannot stand against the glorious presence of God.
4. David knew that this victory through praise is not just for adult believers. He declares in Psalm 8 that this victory has been ordained by God for every age group. This does not only apply to the natural age of a person but also to the spiritual age of a believer. The new Christian needs victory over the attack of the enemy just as much as those who have known the Lord for many years.

Young or old, we all need the power that is released against the enemy's attack, as we praise God.

C. Praising in every circumstance

Read Hebrews 13:15

The Bible challenges us to praise God at all times, even when we do not feel like praising.

When everything is going wrong and we are burdened with different problems, the last thing that we feel like doing is praising God, but that is precisely the right time to offer up to God a sacrifice of praise, proclaiming His goodness and power. We are choosing to believe in God's Word rather than in the circumstances that are against us.

D. God is always working for our good

Read Romans 8:28

1. God says in His Word that He is able to work everything that happens to us for our good.
2. When we give in to doubt and discouragement, we lose the faith in our hearts that releases God's power in our circumstances. Mark 11:24.
3. As we praise in obedience to God's Word, and not because we feel like doing so, we begin to see God's power released in our circumstances. When we praise we are declaring our confidence in God's sovereign working in our lives, to use everything that happens to us for our good.

Illustration: A young man and his wife had prayed for years for the salvation of the man's father who was a hopeless alcoholic. One night they were challenged from the Word to praise in all circumstances. They decided to trust God's Word and for the first time began to praise God despite all the problems that concerned their alcoholic father, including his resistance to the gospel. Within weeks the father was saved and freed from the bondage of alcohol.

Praise does not always bring such instant results, and lack of it is not always the thing that blocks the flow of God's power. It is important though, that we develop a lifestyle of praising God in everything, so that we do not hinder Him from moving through our lives.

E. Deliverance through praise

Read Acts 16:22-35

1. God has given us an extreme example here in His Word to confirm to us that He wants us to praise Him in every situation in which we find ourselves.

Prisons in the time of the New Testament were terrible places to be locked up in. Not only were Paul and Silas in one of these prisons, but their feet were locked in

stocks after they had been severely beaten. What a hopeless and very uncomfortable place to offer up praises to God, but that is exactly what they did.

In the darkest hour of midnight, Paul and Silas set their hearts upon God and not on their terrible conditions. They could have complained and become discouraged thinking that God must have deserted them but, because they chose to offer up a sacrifice of praise, the place was shaken, prison doors were opened and captives were set free.

2. When we choose to praise God the foundations of darkness are shaken and those bound by the devil are set free.

God has given us a key here: Not only will the power which is released through praise set us at liberty, but our praises will set many others free too.

How important it is that we do God's work God's way and like David learn to be a people of praise.

Memory Verse

Hebrews 13:15, *"Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise – the fruit of lips that confess His name".*

Teacher's Notes

David knew the power of praise:

1. It brings deliverance from enemies. 2 Samuel 22:4 and turns back the enemy, Psalm 9:1-3.
2. It is a weapon against strongholds. Psalm 149:6-9.
3. It gives us the desires of our hearts. Psalm 37:4.
4. It brings God's protection. Psalm 5:11.
5. It puts our trust in God. Psalm 13:5-6.
6. It keeps our eyes on God. Psalm 16:7-8.
7. It releases God's power. Psalm 18:3.
8. It lifts us above the enemy. Psalm 27:6.
9. It releases God's provision. Psalm 67:5-7.

These are only a few examples. As you read through the Psalms you will find many more examples of the power of praise.

We are more than conquerors

Lesson 3

A. Introduction

Read 2 Samuel 8:13-15

1. David was successful in all that God called him to do and he defeated the armies that came against God's people.
2. God wants us to be successful in all that He has called us to do in His kingdom.

However, there is a great host of demonic forces that is opposed to God's will being done through us.

As we look at David's life, we can learn some things that will make us victorious over all the forces that are against us and help us fulfil what God has called us to.

B. We face a powerful enemy

Read 1 Samuel 17:1-24

1. Verses 1-10 tell us of the incredible strength of the enemy that stood against God's people. Goliath was an awesome sight, standing nine feet tall, his armour shining in the sun, covered in bronze that weighed over 57 kilograms.

Goliath is a picture of Satan who in all his power seems like an invincible foe.

Verses 11 and 24 show us the effect of this display of power. God's people gave in to fear and discouragement.

2. This is Satan's strategy: to convince us that he is more powerful than God and so rob us of our faith.

When we look at the strongholds of alcohol, drugs, crime etc, we might think we face an invincible foe – but David did not look at the power of the enemy, he looked at the greatness of God.

C. David had his eyes on God's power, not Satan's

Read 1 Samuel 17:25-27

1. Here David asks two questions that show why he walked in God's victory while others hid in fear.
 - a) Verse 26. First he asks, "What will be done for the person who kills this Philistine?"

The others saw the giant while David saw an opportunity.

Behind every problem that we face there is an opportunity. Sometimes we can be so overcome by the problem that we miss the opportunity.

- b) Verse 26. The second question shows us why David saw the opportunity rather than the problem.

David asks, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

David is saying, "What can this man, who is not in covenant with God, do to those who are?" David knew the covenant promises of God to protect His people and to fight for them against all of their enemies. Deuteronomy 20:1-4.

Any one of God's people could have gone against Goliath and defeated him if they had only trusted in God's promises.

- 2. We need to get our eyes off the problems that we face and put our attention on God and His promises to us. Romans 8:32.

Like David we need to let the confession of our mouths be one of positive confidence in God's promises.

D. David was not distracted by the unbelief of others

Read 1 Samuel 17:28-33

- 1. Those who walk in the Spirit and declare their confidence in God's promises will find opposition from those who walk in unbelief.

Verse 28. David's older brother belittled David with his comments, e.g. "those few sheep". Verses 30, 32. David was not distracted by this attack. He continued to declare the promises of God.

Verse 33. Saul declares the obvious conclusion of the natural mind in this situation. How can a young boy, who is not skilled in fighting, go against this well trained giant?

- 2. The spiritual man and the natural man are at war with each other. Galatians 5:16-17. We need to be careful that we are not intimidated by the natural man, or controlled by natural thinking.

Like David, let us see the power of God, who is in us, and put our confidence in Him. Ephesians 1:19.

E. David did not run from his problems

Read 1 Samuel 17:34-37

- 1. In the past wild animals had attacked the flock while David was tending them, but

David did not run from these problems. He faced them and overcame them.

Because David had seen the power of God at work through him against smaller foes, he now had the faith he needed to face an even bigger foe.

2. If we keep running from the small problems that we are facing today, how will we ever face the bigger "Goliaths" of tomorrow?

Illustration: A pastor in North America was walking in the woods and praying one day, when he came around a corner and startled a big bear that was eating from a buck it had just killed. It is known that if you startle a bear while it is eating, it will attack you. The bear, weighing 350 kilograms, was a ferocious sight as it stood to its full height of 8 feet and roared at the pastor with its mouth full of enormous teeth. The pastor, knowing that he could not outrun the bear, asked God what he should do. The Lord spoke to the pastor's spirit and said, "this is not a coincidence". The small pastor stepped towards the bear and, pointing his finger at the animal, shouted, "I rebuke you in Jesus' name". The bear turned and ran.

The pastor knew that he was in God and that the Sovereign Lord had allowed this problem to come his way to test his faith. If the pastor had run he would surely have been defeated by the problem and probably killed.

Because the pastor faced the problem, he had a testimony of victory in his own heart to face even bigger problems in the future.

F. David did not trust in man's way for victory

Read 1 Samuel 17:38-40

The entire Israelite army with all of their weapons and armour were not able to defeat the Philistines, yet they wanted to send David with these same weapons. David knew that he was not skilled in the use of Saul's armour and that it did not fit him.

Many people today are trying to do God's work with man's methods and wonder why they are unsuccessful against the strongholds of darkness.

Read 2 Corinthians 10:3-4

The ways of the world do not suit the Christian. God's work can only be done God's way with the weapons that He has given us. We need to put on God's unseen armour that is ours in Christ and become skilled in the use of our spiritual weapons. Ephesians 6:13-18.

David knew that there was no way that he could defeat the enemy. He was relying on God's power to bring down this giant.

We will be successful in God's work when we stop relying on our own abilities and start recognising our absolute dependence upon God's intervention.

G. David's confidence was in the Lord alone

Read 1 Samuel 17:41-50

1. It is one thing to confess our confidence in God when we are at a safe distance from the conflict, but many times we falter and pull back in the heat of the battle.

Verses 43-44. Goliath in all his awesome might towered over insignificant David and boasted of his power. The outcome of this battle would seem inevitable and to run would seem to be the only sensible thing for David to do.

Verses 45-47. David continued to declare his unwavering confidence in God. He knew without a doubt that he would be victorious because he was standing in the name of the Lord.

2. Once again it shows us that the battle is not ours. It is the Lord's.

As we stand against the strongholds of darkness in our own lives and the lives of others, Satan will make every effort to convince us that he is more powerful and that our efforts are hopeless.

Read Romans 8:35-37

It does not matter how impossible the problem is that we face, we are more than conquerors through Christ. Let us recognize who we are in Christ and the victory that He has won for us at the cross.

As we come against the enemy in the name of the Lord and declare his defeat, we will walk in the liberty that is ours in Christ.

Memory Verse

1 Samuel 17:47, "... *it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's ...*"

Teacher's Notes

Other keys in David's life that made him successful against his enemies:

He sought God's direction

Read 2 Samuel 5:17-25

Verses 19, 23 "David enquired of the Lord". Here is one of the main keys to David's success. David was not relying upon his past successes. He knew that in each battle, victory depended upon the Lord and so he would need the Lord's direction.

The Lord was with him

Read 1 Samuel 18:14

1. David was not trying to do the Lord's work apart from the Lord. He was walking in a close relationship with the Lord, fulfilling what God had called him to do.
2. We will have success as we develop an intimate relationship with the Lord.

He developed a team.

Read 1 Chronicles 11:10

1. David did not try to do God's work alone but built a strong team to effectively accomplish the work.
2. God will bless us as we link together with a team. A team will be much more successful in defeating the enemy than a single person alone. Leviticus 26:8. There is great protection in a team against the devil's schemes. Proverbs 11:14

He saw God's bigger vision

Read 1 Chronicles 14:2

1. David knew that God was not blessing him for his own sake alone, but for the sake of His people. His vision went beyond his own personal gains. He was successful because his vision was for the building up of God's people.
2. We will be successful as we keep our eyes upon God's vision of building up His people.

He gave all the glory to God

Read 2 Samuel 22:28-51

1. David acknowledged that it was God who gave him the victory and not his own ability. So he gave all the praise and glory to God alone.
2. Pride will bring our downfall. We will continue to have great success in God's work as long as we do not take any of the glory for ourselves. Like David, let us give all the glory to God. He alone deserves all the praise.

The testing of our faith

Lesson 4

A. Introduction

Read 1 Samuel 18:5-16; 28-30

1. Because David walked in fellowship with the Lord, he had great success in all that he did.

With such an obvious stamp of God's blessing upon his life, surely this servant of God would be freed from all strife? We might think that David would now lead a life of ease and that the Lord would ensure that he never had to suffer conflict.

We know that this was not the case for David. God allowed David to face many trials in his life.

2. God does not promise to keep any of us free from problems, but He does promise to protect us and give us strength in them. Psalm 34:17-22. He also promises to use all things that happen to us for our good, as we trust Him in our trials. Romans 8:28.

B. God uses problems to purify us

Read Psalm 66:10-12

David said that one of the reasons he faced problems was so that he would be refined. He compares the refining process to precious metals that need to have intense heat applied to them to work out the impurities, so that a pure metal can be produced.

David was a young boy when he was anointed to be king by Samuel the prophet, but it was not until he was thirty years old that he actually became king. 1 Samuel 16:13; 2 Samuel 5:4. In the meanwhile David was hunted down like a dog by Saul and had to face many trials. 1 Samuel 23:14.

God was working character into David's life to refine and shape a man that God could use for His service. Even after David became king, God continued to allow the refining heat of affliction to shape His servant.

C. God is refining our faith

Read 1 Peter 1:5-7

1. Verse 5. God promises to protect us in our trials.
2. Verse 6. We are not to complain or become discouraged in our trials, but to actually rejoice because we know that God is using these for our good.
3. Verse 7. The most important work that is being done in us through our problems,

is that our faith is being strengthened. We know that we receive all of the things that God has for us by faith – so anything that perfects our faith is very worthwhile. Problems force us to exercise our faith and draw upon the Lord for help. As we see the Lord intervene in our circumstances, we are encouraged in our faith to trust God in everything. We become enlarged in our faith and can trust God for even bigger things in the future.

D. God is refining our character

Read Romans 5:3-4

1. We are challenged to rejoice in our sufferings, because something is being worked in us that far outweighs any problems.

Perseverance means pressing on and not giving up. God wants to develop that spiritual muscle in us that presses on in Christ even in times of extreme difficulty. James 1:2-4.

2. We find out just how mature we are in Christ when we are placed under pressure, because problems have a way of showing us where our weakness and strength of character are. As our weak areas are highlighted, we know what we need to work on and so grow in Christ-like character.

As we choose to respond in a Christ-like manner during these times, character is being built in us.

E. God is refining our relationship with Him

Read Psalm 63:1-11

1. David wrote this psalm as he was hiding from Saul in the desert. In this psalm we see more of the tremendous benefits that our problems can bring to us if we will respond in the right way. David responded to his problems by drawing nearer to the Lord, so that he cries out in verse 8, "my soul clings to you".
2. Trials force us to a place of desperation where we cry out to God and seek Him with our whole heart. It is when we seek Him with our whole heart that God reveals Himself to us in a greater dimension. Jeremiah 29:13.

Adversity presses us into the Lord where we gain a closer relationship with Him. Job 42:5.

Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

3. Self-reliance is the greatest hindrance to God's life and power being worked through us.

Verse 8. Paul pleaded with the Lord a number of times to take away this thing that was afflicting him. Verse 9 – but God said, "No, it is good for you because it will force you to rely on Me and not on yourself".

Verse 10. Paul describes some of the trials that God had used in his life to make him rely on God.

4. If we walk in obedience to the Lord, we will find ourselves facing "weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and difficulties".

If we complain and get discouraged, we will miss out on an opportunity to see God's power, but if we draw close to the Lord in confidence, we will see Him work.

When we are weak in ourselves, God's power can be revealed through us.

F. God is refining our love

Read Psalm 22:11, 22-24

1. Verse 11. At the beginning of this psalm, David is crying out to God for help in the great trials. Although this psalm is prophetic of what Christ went through on the cross, it is also descriptive of what David went through.

The tone of the psalm changes at verse 22. The psalmist begins to comfort others who may be going through similar problems.

2. Here is one of the positive results of any suffering that we may have to go through. We will have a far greater compassion for those who are suffering if we have been through suffering ourselves.

Read Hebrews 13:3

God does not want us to be indifferent to the suffering of others in the body of Christ. Romans 12:15. He wants us to enter into their suffering in our hearts, so that we might pray for them and encourage them.

We will do this much more effectively when we have had to work through suffering ourselves, with the Lord's help.

Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Verse 4. Paul says that one of the reasons God has allowed him to suffer, is so that he may comfort others who are suffering also.

Verse 5. God's comfort should "overflow" through us. We must co-operate with the Lord and not keep His comfort to ourselves, but comfort others with the comfort that we have received.

G. Conclusion

Read 1 Corinthians 15:57-58

We do not have to seek after trials, but we know that trials are part of God's will for us.

We are not to become discouraged and overcome by our trials. We will grow and mature in all that God has for us as we learn to walk victoriously in Christ.

Memory Verse

Romans 5:3-4, "*...we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope*".

Teacher's Notes

More scriptures on the positive effects of trials

1. To humble and teach us. Deuteronomy 8:2-5.
2. To reveal Christ's life in us. 2 Corinthians 4:7-12.
3. To mature us. James 1:2-4.
4. To discipline us. Hebrews 12:7-13.
5. To test what is in our hearts. 2 Chronicles 32:31.
6. To stretch our faith. Mark 11:22-23.
7. To focus our attention on the Lord. Hebrews 12:2-3.

The character of Christ (part one)

Lesson 5

A. Introduction

Read Acts 13:22

God was able to use David because he had a heart that desired the things pleasing to God. God said, "he will do everything I want him to do".

The Bible says that what is in our heart will affect the choices that we make in life. Luke 6:43-45.

As we look at the character of David, we will be challenged to let the heart of Christ be in us that will produce the fruit that pleases God.

B. David had a heart of total devotion to God

1. Wholehearted devotion.

Read 1 Chronicles 28:9

- a) In David's challenge to his son Solomon, we see the major reason that David had a heart that pleased God.
- b) Jesus said that the most important command of God is that we love the Lord with our whole heart.
- c) It is through a heart of devotion to Him that God can reveal Himself and work His power in us.

2. A heart for worship.

Read Psalm 33:1-3 and 16-22

- a) Through the story of David's life and through the writing of his psalms, we see a man who loved to spend time with God. He spent much time in praise, worship and prayer.

David acknowledged that it was not because of his ability that God used him. He knew that he was completely reliant upon the Lord's help.

So he decided to spend time in God's presence, allowing God to impart His character and ability to him. He wanted to spend lots of time in being enthralled with God so that his heart would not be set upon other things.

- b) David knew that God would work through those who put their trust in Him alone. Verse 18.
- c) God desires worshippers; people whose hearts are captivated by him. John 4:23. Like David, let us develop this heart that pleases God.

3. **Drawing on God's strength.**

Read 1 Samuel 30:3-6

- a) This was a time of great distress. David and his men had lost their families and everything that they owned. His own men wanted to kill him. The natural man, in his grief, looks for someone to blame.

But David was not like other men. He was a worshipper who was used to spending time in God's presence and allowing God to be enthroned in his heart. Verse 6. So in the midst of a trial, he turned to God and allowed his heart to be strengthened again in Him.

- b) If we want to be overcomers, we will have to develop a lifestyle of worship like David did and allow God to be enthroned in our heart.

C. **David had a heart to be under authority**

1. **Do not touch God's anointed.**

Read 1 Samuel 24:3-7; 26:7-12

Because David was a man who had submitted himself to God's authority, he did not have a problem submitting himself to those whom God put in authority over him.

David was severely put to the test in this attitude, because the man God had called him to honour was seeking to kill him.

On numerous occasions David was in a position to kill Saul and was encouraged by his men to do so but, even though God's favour had left Saul, David would not harm him because he recognized Saul's position as a man appointed by God.

2. **Respect leadership in the church.**

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

We are commanded to respect and hold in highest regard those whom God places in authority over us in the church.

Respect is an attitude of the heart that honours, esteems and recognizes the position of the one having authority. However, it does not mean absolute obedience even to the point of physical or spiritual harm.

David honoured Saul's position but he did not submit to Saul's desire to kill him.

Because of David's respect for Saul's place of authority in the Lord, he would do nothing to harm him, but committed Saul into God's hands.

3. **Be slow to criticise.**

Read 1 Timothy 5:19

We are cautioned about criticizing those in authority in the church.

We may not be in a position like David was, with a knife in his hands to kill Saul, but we can cause far more damage with our mouths.

We need a heart like David that will not harm those in authority in the church, but will rather honour and esteem them. The leaders of the church carry great responsibility. They need our prayers and encouraging support, not our criticism. 1 Thessalonians 5:25.

D. David had a heart of sacrifice

1. **Sacrifice the most precious.**

Read 1 Chronicles 11:15-19

God had called David to be a leader and shepherd of His people. David could have said, "I am the king, I deserve the best, whatever it costs".

David recognized that this water represented the lives of the men who had gone to get it for him. Even though he was very thirsty and longed for this water, he was willing to sacrifice it to serve the Lord. To drink the water would have been taking advantage of those that God had called him to serve.

To follow Christ is to serve God and to serve His people, whatever it costs.

2. **To follow Christ costs everything.**

Read Luke 14:25-33

- a) Verse 25. The large crowds were following Jesus because they saw the great things that He could do for them.

Jesus told them that it was true that He could do great things for them, but they needed to count the cost of following Him. Verse 33. To follow Christ will cost us everything.

- b) This does not mean that we must give away everything that we have and live in poverty. David lived a life of prosperity in a palace, but at times he also lived in caves.

Because David's heart was devoted to the Lord, in his heart he had surrendered everything to the Lord, even those things that were most precious to him.

- c) If we want to follow the Lord, nothing that we have or desire must hinder us from obeying Him. Matthew 19:20-22.

Memory Verse

Psalm 33:20-21, *"We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name"*.

Teacher's Notes

The authority of leaders in the church:

In this lesson we have been challenged to submit to those in authority in the church. It is important for us to recognize God's challenge to us as leaders. God challenges us to develop a heart that will inspire the sheep to follow our leadership.

1. The heart of Christ.

Read Ephesians 5:21-33

We are Christ's representatives in leading the church. So we are to lead the church with the same heart that Christ has. The marriage relationship is a picture of the relationship between the church and Christ, the head.

The wife is told to submit to the husband, but the husband is **not** told to force submission from the wife. The husband is commanded to love the wife with such love that the wife will joyfully submit herself to him.

This is the standard for all who have positions of authority in the church.

2. Do not dominate.

Read Matthew 20:25-28

We are not to lord it over the people, to dominate them or to demand absolute obedience. We are to encourage them into maturity by being examples of Christ-likeness and obedience to God.

3. Do not take advantage of anyone.

Read 1 Chronicles 11:19

This is an example of being willing to sacrifice that which is most precious to us in service to the Lord. However, this is also an example to us for not demanding our rights as leaders at the expense of the people.

The character of Christ (part two)

Lesson 6

A. Introduction

Read Psalm 78:70-72

God worked these two things in David's life: skilful hands and integrity of heart.

We see the importance of developing skills to serve God, but often we neglect to develop the right heart attitudes. David was able to be successful in what God had called him to do, not only because of his skill, but also because of the integrity of his heart.

We will only be successful in what God has called us to, if we allow the heart of Christ to be developed in us.

B. David had a heart to forgive those who mistreated him

1. Even in difficult times.

Read 2 Samuel 16:5-13

David was at a very low time in his life. His own son, Absalom, had rallied the people to overthrow David as king. David had lost his position, his home, his son, the honour of the people that he had served so faithfully and he had to run for his life again.

He must have been very tired and dejected as Shimei cursed, slandered and threw rocks at him. What a temptation it must have been to take his frustration out on Shimei. David could so easily have removed Shimei's head in retaliation.

But remember David was a man whose heart was captivated by the Lord. His eyes were upon the Lord and so he had another standard to live by.

Verse 10. His men thought of retaliation, but David only thought of the Lord. Verse 12. David knew that if he chose God's way, God could use this situation for a blessing.

2. God's way is to bless.

Read 1 Peter 3:8-17

- a) Verse 9. It is not God's way to retaliate with insults when we are insulted, or to do evil to those who do evil to us.

God promises to bless us if we will bless those who mistreat us. So every time we are mistreated, we actually have an opportunity to be blessed by God, if we will respond in the right way.

- b) Verse 15. Here again is David's key to walking in God's way. He revered God in his heart.

- c) Remember God uses problems, to train us to be like Him and respond from His heart of love and forgiveness. Matthew 5:43-48.

3. **We can choose His way.**

Read 2 Samuel 19:18-23

- a) Verse 21. In the church there are those who try to influence us to choose man's way of doing things.
- b) Verse 22. David made the way of the flesh his enemy and resolved to choose the way of the Spirit. He knew that he was king and so it was in his power to do whatever he wanted, but he chose to do things God's way. Shimei had asked for forgiveness and God's way was for David to forgive him. Matthew 18:21-22.

C. **David had a generous heart**

1. **A generous heart like God's.**

Read 1 Samuel 30:9-10, 16-31

Verse 22. Some of David's men showed a greedy heart that is not pleasing to God. They saw an opportunity to keep the spoils of the battle for themselves and not share with the men who had stayed behind with the supplies.

Verse 24. However, David showed the generous heart of God that desires to see others blessed. Verse 23. David recognized the generosity of God to him and so he could, like God, be generous to others.

Verses 26-30. David's generous heart overflowed, to ensure that all of God's people enjoyed the blessing of this victory, even those who had not been involved in the battle.

Our extravagant God wants us to have this same extravagant heart.

2. **Everything we have is God's.**

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-7

- a) Verses 2-3. This is the generosity that pleases God. They gave even beyond their ability to give.
- b) Verse 5. Here we see the reason that they could be so extravagant in their giving. When we have given ourselves to God, everything that we have belongs to Him, and we wait upon Him to see what He wants us to do with the things that He has entrusted us with.

We need to always keep this attitude in our hearts. Everything that we have must be surrendered to Him. Verse 7. And from this heart of surrender we

can ask God to give us the grace to excel in being generous.

3. God will bless us.

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-11

Verse 6. It is worth excelling in being generous because the more we give, the more God promises will be given to us.

Verse 8. As we co-operate with God, we can trust Him to give us the abounding grace that we need to be generous instead of selfish.

Verse 10. Our all-powerful, sovereign God has the ability to give us more. Verse 11. This is the reason God wants to give us an abundant supply – so that we will be able to give even more.

4. Blessed to be a blessing.

Read 2 Samuel 5:9-12

a) Verses 9-10. God gave David more, making him very prosperous.

Verse 12. David had a vision for the kingdom and so he did not become proud in all his prosperity. David knew that God had prospered him and made him very powerful so that God's people would be blessed.

b) As God prospers us, we must recognize that it is for the extension of God's kingdom and not for us to waste on ourselves.

Let us ask God to give us a generous heart, so that the work of God's kingdom can be done.

D. David had a friendly heart

Read 1 Samuel 18:1-4

1. Love builds.

People loved David and wanted to be his friend. 2 Samuel 3:36, 15:37.

The work of the Spirit of God in us changes us. Our selfish, self-centred heart is changed to a generous, loving heart that desires to bless others. Jonathan recognized that heart in David and so he desired to be close friends with him.

Jonathan loved David so much that he made a covenant with David. In the natural David was a threat to Jonathan's position, as Jonathan would have been the next king. 1 Samuel 20:30-31. David was also a threat to Jonathan's life. When a king came to power, he normally put to death any of the former ruler's descendants.

But the love of God in David's heart put aside all fear and striving for position in Jonathan's heart.

The love of God in us has great power to break down fear and disunity in the body of Christ.

2. Love believes.

Read 1 Corinthians 13:6-7

- a) The natural man builds a wall around his heart, fearfully protecting himself from being hurt by others.
- b) But the love of God puts faith and boldness in our hearts to reach out in trust and embrace others. Good relationships are built upon trust. The love of God always perseveres in trust.

God's love in our hearts will break down fear in others and cause them to trust us, and it will also give us faith to trust others.

3. Love is friendly.

Read John 15:12-15

- a) Verse 15. Jesus wants us to enjoy our relationship with Him as a friend. Verse 13. He has proven the love of His friendship for us by giving His very life.
- b) Verse 12. God wants us to give ourselves as friends to each other with that same kind of love. God's love will challenge us to sacrifice our own selfish desires for the needs of others. Philippians 2:3.

We will function more effectively as the body of Christ when we build good relationships with each other. Only as God's sacrificial love is released in our heart will we build these relationships.

4. Love is powerful.

Read Acts 2:42-47

Verse 42. Not only did the early church devote themselves to good teaching and to prayer, they also devoted themselves to fellowship.

The word fellowship in Greek is "koinonia". It means participation and intimacy.

Verse 43. If we want the power that the early church experienced, we will have to devote ourselves to the things that they devoted themselves to. We will have to sacrifice our pride and independence to devote ourselves to more intimate relationships in the body of Christ.

Memory Verse

1 Corinthians 13:6-7, *"Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres".*

Teacher's Notes

Look at the result of the lack of character found in Saul's life:

Read 1 Chronicles 10:13-14

1. He was unfaithful.
2. He did not keep the Word of the Lord.
3. He did not inquire of the Lord. 1 Chronicles 13:3.
4. God turned his ministry over to David.

The lack of Christ's character in us will bring death to the life of the Spirit and destroy our ministry. Let us dedicate ourselves to allow Christ-like character to be worked out in our lives.

A repentant heart

Lesson 7

A. The complacency of David brought sin

Read 2 Samuel 11:1-5, 14-17

David experienced many victories in the Lord, displayed much of the character of Christ and enjoyed great blessings from God.

With all of this success in the Lord, one might think that David was above giving in to any temptations but, after great success, we can be in great danger because we begin to relax and let down our defences.

This was the time that David should have been busy with God's work, on a campaign with his men. Instead David was relaxing at home and in his boredom was open to temptation. David forgot about the character of heart that brought God's calling and blessings. Pride, lust and greed deceived him into thinking that he could kill an innocent man and take his wife for himself.

Temptation is a dangerous thing to give in to; because once sin is born in our hearts it demands satisfaction and gives birth to more sin. James 1:15. Having committed adultery, David went on to deceit, to murder and to more adultery.

B. David repented of his sin

Read 2 Samuel 12:7-14

1. Verse 13. When God confronted David with his sin, David did not make any excuses. He knew the response God was looking for and was quick to repent.
2. Because of David's repentance, God removed David's sin.
3. Verses 10, 11, 14. However, David still suffered the consequences of his sin. His son died, the sword did not depart from his house, and calamity did come from within his own household.

We should not think that we can take advantage of God's grace by continuing in sin and then repenting from time to time to restore God's favour. Romans 6:1. We must walk in the fear of the Lord. He is a holy and an awesome God who wants to work His holiness in our lives.

When we recognize our sin we must be quick to repent, which will remove sin's harmful effects from our lives and restore our fellowship with God.

C. David's repentance was from the heart

Read Psalm 51

1. This psalm was written by David when he was confronted with his sin by Nathan the prophet after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

2. We see in this psalm that David's repentance was a deep repentance from the heart and not just from his mouth.

David recognized:

- a) the great love of God that allows us to come to Him and even begin to expect mercy from Him. Verse 1.
- b) his transgressions as sin and confessed them to God. Verse 3. To confess means to agree. To repent we need to first of all agree with God that what we have done is sin.
- c) that his sin was against God, as sin is disobedience to God and grieves the heart of God. Verse 4.
- d) the source of his sin. It was the sin nature within him that he inherited from Adam. Verse 5.
- e) the heart of truth that God desires. Verse 7. He also knew that God alone could deal with his sin. All of David's good efforts would not make him clean within.

Verses 8-10. So David cried from his heart in repentance before God and asked Him to cleanse him from all sin in his innermost being and to restore their close fellowship again. Verse 11-12.

3. People who have enjoyed deep communion with God will cry from their hearts in repentance so that fellowship can be restored.

Verses 16-17. David knew that God was not looking for an outward show of service to Him. A hard, unrepentant heart can put on an outward show of service.

Only a heart that has been softened through repentance can offer the service that is pleasing to God.

D. Saul did not repent from the heart

Read 1 Samuel 15:1-34

1. Verse 3. God gave Saul a very clear command through the prophet Samuel. Saul was to totally destroy all of the Amalekites, their animals and everything that belonged to them.
2. Verse 9. But Saul did not obey the Lord. Verse 10,11. Here we see how much disobedience grieves God's heart.
3. Verse 12. Disobedience and pride go together. Saul set up a monument in his own honour.
4. Verse 13. As in the case of David, sin leads to more sin. From disobedience, Saul went on to a show of pride and then lied to God's servant. Verse 15. Rather than agree with God in repentance when confronted with his sin, Saul began to make excuses.

Then Saul added to his sins by blaming others for his disobedience. He wanted the glory of being the leader, but he did not want to take the responsibility of being accountable for the actions of the people.

Verses 20-21. Saul is was again confronted with his sin but again he continued to lie and make excuses.

Verses 22-23. Again we see the seriousness of disobedience in God's eyes. We take it lightly but God considers it just as serious as bowing down to an idol or seeking the advice of demons. God takes our sin this seriously because when we disobey we are no longer worshipping God but choosing to go our own way.

5. Verse 24-26. Finally Saul admitted his sin, but his repentance was not from the heart or God would have forgiven him. 1 John 1:9. Verse 30. Saul was not grieving over his sin. His only concern was that he would no longer be honoured as king before the people by God.

What a contrast there is between the deep grief of David seen in Psalm 51 and the sorrow of Saul which was only for the loss of his position.

Verse 35. May God never say of us that He is grieved that He called us into His service. Let us be quick to repent and grieve sincerely over sin.

E. Real repentance is sorrowful

Read 2 Corinthians 7:9-11

There are two sorrows named here, but only one of them is pleasing to God.

1. The first one is Godly sorrow that grieves over sin and leads to repentance.
2. The other sorrow is the sorrow of the world that grieves over the inconvenience and loss, but not over the sin itself and the grief it brings to God.

The first, like the sorrow of David, leads to life in the things of the Spirit. The second, like the sorrow of Saul, leads to death in the things of the Spirit.

Let us ask God to give us a soft heart that is quick to repent, so that we might walk in all the things that He has for us.

Memory Verse

Psalm 51:10, *"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me"*.

Teacher's Notes

Some evidence of real repentance:

Confessing of sin (Luke 18:13); Making restitution (Luke 19:8); Removing idols (1 Samuel 7:3); Removing things of witchcraft (Acts 19:19); Serving God (1 Thessalonians 1:9); Producing good fruit (Matthew 3:8, 7:15-20); Doing good deeds (Acts 26:20); Absolute acceptance of God's will (2 Samuel 12:15-23).

A heart for God's presence

Lesson 8

A. Introduction

Read Psalm 27:4

In the Old Testament God's presence was found only in His house where the ark was.

David was longing to be in God's presence. In this Psalm David says that wherever he goes and whatever he does, he wants to keep coming back and enjoy God's presence.

David knew God as the source of everything he needed, but he proclaims, "*One thing I ask of the Lord... to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord.*"

God wants us to have this heart attitude. He wants us to desire fellowship with Him more than all the good things He can do for us. Out of this intimate relationship with Him will come everything we need.

B. We are living temples for God's presence

Read 1 Corinthians 3:16-17

In the New Testament God no longer manifests His presence in an ark found in a building. We are the living buildings in which God dwells and wants to reveal Himself.

Because of the blood of Jesus Christ, we can fellowship with God freely wherever we are. However, because God wants us to work together as His body, He will manifest Himself in a special way when we come together to seek His presence. Matthew 18:20.

Although we do not find God in a building, we can still learn some important lessons from David in seeking God's presence.

C. God wants to bring us life not death

Read 2 Samuel 6:1-8

1. David so longed for God's presence that he wanted to bring the ark to Jerusalem.

This was the ark of God's awesome presence which the High Priest would fearfully approach once a year - the ark that brought death, plagues and destruction after being captured by the Philistines. 1 Samuel 5:1-12.

2. God had given strict instructions to the priests on how to approach the Ark and how to carry it. Numbers 4:15,19-20. But because David and his men did not listen to these instructions found in God's Word, God struck one of them dead.

This tells us to approach God the way He has shown us in His Word. God's way will bring life and liberty of spirit, which is what God desires for us. Romans 8:2.

D. David learnt to do it God's way

Read 2 Samuel 6:5, 9-19

1. Verse 9. Reverence for God was in David's heart now - and not just zeal.
2. Verses 10-11. The person who enjoys God's manifest presence will be blessed .
3. Verse 13. The way into God's presence required first of all a sacrifice of blood. This blood pointed to the cross where Jesus would shed His blood for our salvation.
4. Verse 14. The linen ephod was a priestly garment that symbolized the robe of righteousness that is needed for us to approach God.

We cannot approach God if we are not robed in the righteousness that comes by faith in the work of Jesus on the cross. Romans 4:24.

5. Verse 5. They knew that the way into God's presence was through a sacrifices of praise, thanksgiving and joy. Psalm 100.

God is looking for people who will abandon themselves in extravagant, wholehearted, spiritual sacrifices of praise to Him. 1 Peter 2:5,9.

E. David would rather please God than man

Read 2 Samuel 6:16, 20-23

1. Because David wanted God's presence more than anything else, he was more concerned about serving God than impressing other people. He was excited about God's presence. He shouted, sang and danced before the Lord with everything that was in him, offering the spiritual sacrifices pleasing to God.

Verse 22. To enter into everything that God has for us we need the same heart as David had, who was willing to be humiliated and undignified in the eyes of others if necessary.

2. Verse 16. Instead of joining in with the people to bring in God's presence, Michal sat at home, offended by their exuberance. Verse 20. Because Michal was more concerned about what people thought than about God's presence, she missed out on God's blessing.

This is a picture of many people today who will not enter into praise and worship in the liberty of the Spirit which brings God's manifest presence and blessing to the church.

Verse 23. Many today are barren in their spirits and their churches because they will not enter into God's presence, God's way.

F. David was willing to sacrifice to see God's presence

Read 1 Chronicles 21:18-26

1. Verse 24. David would not offer up a sacrifice to God that did not cost him something.
2. Many are not entering into God's presence today because they are not willing to pay the price.

If they feel like praying they will pray. If they feel like praising they will praise. If they feel like serving God they will serve Him...

If we are governed by our feelings we will not enter into what God has for us.

To come to Christ is to surrender all of our personal desires to do His will. Luke 17:7-10. We will have to overcome our feelings to offer up sacrifices of praise, joy and thanksgiving to the Lord. We do not seek Him because we feel like it, but because time in His presence is our first priority.

G. David's way becomes an example for us

Read Acts 15:15-16

1. God was doing a new thing through David.

When the Ark was in the Tabernacle of Moses the people were afraid to approach God. Then God allowed His ark to be taken into the Tabernacle of David where all could freely enjoy His presence.

In the Tabernacle of David there was exuberant expression of praise and worship that was led by the Holy Spirit. Many new songs were composed there and new expressions of praise and worship were experienced by the people.

2. God said that He wants to rebuild the tabernacle of David in these last days.

This does not mean that God wants us to pitch a tent like David did and build an ark to put in it. We are the tabernacle of God's presence. What God wants to rebuild in the church today is the freedom of praise and worship led by the Spirit.

God is looking for a people who will worship Him in spirit and truth. John 4:24.

Because David did not stay with the old way of seeking God, but submitted himself to the leading of the Spirit of God, he experienced God's fullness.

Let this be a challenge to us to move on with the Spirit in praise and worship and see God's manifest presence in our lives and churches.

Memory Verse

Psalm 27:4, *"One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple".*

Teacher's Notes

Hebrews 12:22. We are called to Mount Zion, to the tabernacle of David:

1. Singing. 1 Chronicles 15:16.
2. Instruments and music. 1 Chronicles 23:5.
3. Thanksgiving. 1 Chronicles 16:4, 8, 41.
4. Praise. 1 Chronicles 16:4, 36.
5. Clapping. Psalm 47:1
6. Shouts of Praise. 1 Chronicles 15:28
7. Dancing. 1 Chronicles 15:29
8. Lifting of hands. Psalm 134:1-2.
9. Rejoicing. Psalm 27:6.
10. The way to God open and all priests minister before the ark.