

## Sermon for 06/11/06

### ***David: A Man After God's Own Heart! - God's Heart, God's Man, God's Ways***

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Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,  
AMEN

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**Main Theme:** This summer we will study the amazing story of David – a shepherd boy who became King! Today we look at the beginning of the story and realize that David's outward appearance did not set him apart in any way. But God chose David because he was a man after His own heart. The qualities He saw in David were; spirituality, humility, and integrity. We also see that God trained his servant in 1) solitude, 2) obscurity, 3) monotony, and 4) reality! Here in the humble beginning, we discover that it is in the little things and in the lonely places that we prove ourselves capable of the big things. And... when God develops our inner qualities, He's never in a hurry. It is important that we focus on Christ, opening ourselves to His Spirit, that we too might become men and women after God's own heart. (Based on Chuck Swindoll's book "David" and other research.)

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**1) You!** Today a couple of *special young men* (at the 2<sup>nd</sup> service) are getting confirmed. They (**You**) are **old enough** to have dreams, and still **young enough** not to know what tomorrow will bring. On the surface, there seems to be nothing about them (**you**) that **sets them** (**you**) **apart** from all the other millions of kids in America. In many ways they (**you**) are a lot like the young shepherd boy named **David!** The only physical description we have is when **Samuel**, God's prophet, tells us, (**2nd Samuel 16:12b**) "**He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features.**" Like our young confirmands, David's outward appearance didn't seem to set him apart in any way – and yet, God basically said to David, "**You have what I am looking for, young man. You are the future servant-King of Israel.**"

**2) YOU HAVE WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR!** Today, I want to say to (our confirmands and) every Christian here – that **God is looking at you** and proclaiming – "**You have what I am looking for, beloved child of mine! You are a future servant-king!**" Your *specific* details – I don't have! But know this: **God has been looking for you – and you have the potential to do great things for God!** I realize that some of you *struggle to believe* that. As much as you **wish** you could be used by God to make a positive **impact** on this world, you have spent a great deal of time looking in the mirror. And you wonder how God could see anything there to **admire**. Let's face it, when looking for people **to admire**, the world seeks out the beautiful people, the brilliant people, the successful people! The applause goes to the **best** and the **brightest!** And

since most of us **don't** fall into any of those categories, we *appreciate* the idea that God would seek us out – but quietly we wonder – **“Why would God seek me out at all? What would make God think He could take an average ‘nobody’ like me and make me into a ‘somebody’? What do I possess that would cause Jesus to say, “You have what I’m looking for!?”**

**3) A SORRY CONDITION!** Samuel had been sent by God to the house of Jesse to anoint one of his many sons to be the *future King* of Israel. Why? Because the nation of Israel was in **a sorry condition!** David and his 7 brothers had been born into a world where the people were on **“a long drift from God!”** (G. Fredrick Owen). *Eli*, the high priest, and all his wicked sons were gone. God’s chosen successor, **Samuel**, was now an old man. His making his sons the new judges over Israel was a big mistake! **(1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 8:1-3) “And it came about when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons judges over Israel. ...his sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside, after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice.”** So the people were **disillusioned!** Israel was in **a sorry condition!**

**4) THEY CHOSE/GOD CHOSE!** I guess wanting to “be like everyone else”, or to do the “popular thing,” *isn't* just a modern day phenomenon! Instead of *waiting on God* to provide what they needed, the people of Israel decided that **what they needed was a king!** They wanted to *look like all the other nations!* *Samuel* was disappointed, and **God** was ticked, so He taught them a lesson – *he gave them what they wanted!* **And did He ever!** The man **they chose** was **Saul** – tall, dark, and handsome! He **DID** look the part! On the outside he looked like “a man’s man!” But Saul turned into a *power hungry, thin-skinned, hot-tempered King*, who sunk into **long periods of depression!** Israel’s king was **not walking with God**, and so *despite* his “outward appearance”, the people got **disillusioned** with Saul! The gracious Lord, who **loved** His wayward people, would **not** abandon them – but **He** would choose the next King! And **God chose David.**

**5) WHICH SON?** Before he left, Samuel had told King Saul, **“You acted foolishly,”** Samuel said, **“You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you; if you had he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord’s command.”** (1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 13:13-14) Now Samuel stands in Jesse’s house, as each of his **sons** is introduced. (However, David, the youngest of 8, was still out in the fields). Even Samuel doesn’t know **which son** the Lord will choose. But that didn’t stop him from making a guess. **“When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, ‘Surely the Lord’s anointed stands here before the Lord.’”** (1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 16:6) Samuel was convinced the oldest **son** looked like the type usually chosen to be a king. He was enamored by the **externals**, ...like most of us!

**6) OUTWARD APPEARANCE!** How many of us as children were picked **last** for the baseball teams because we looked small or not athletic? Whether we could play or not was *irrelevant*, some were picked last because of **outward appearances!** What young woman has not seen a **potential boyfriend** swing away to follow the “blond bombshell” with the big... eyes? Or who here has watched a **job promotion** go to a person with less qualifications? **...but they looked the part!** We’ve all heard the quote: **Don’t judge**

a book by its cover! But we still *instinctively* do it! But listen to what Samuel learns about God when He bets on the wrong horse! “But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not consider his **appearance** or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the **outward appearance**, but the Lord looks at **the heart**.’” (1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 16:7)

7) **THE ONE!** Remember what God had said earlier, “The Lord has sought out for Himself a man after his own heart...” Samuel watched 7 sons walk by, but didn’t realize that God was looking *past* the exterior, into the very heart of each young man, and had rejected each of them to be king. They were not “**the one**”. “So he asked Jesse, ‘Are these all the sons you have?’ ‘There is still the youngest,’ Jesse answered, ‘But he is tending the sheep.’ Samuel said, ‘Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.’” (1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 16:11) When the ordinary shepherd boy shows up, Samuel was surprised but pleased because “Then the Lord said, ‘Rise and anoint him; he is **the one**.’” (verse 12b)

8) **HEART!** I (will) remind the confirmands (at the 2<sup>nd</sup> service) – David was *just a teenager*. There wasn’t even a *hint* of what lie ahead or how he might grow into Israel’s most beloved king. All we know is that **THIS** is the one God has been seeking. God said, “I’m looking for a man after my own **heart**. I’m searching for that person!” Notice, the Lord isn’t looking for the *beautiful* people, the *brilliant* people, not even the *successful* people – He’s looking for people who are **after God’s own heart**. God doesn’t make His choices based on the *exterior* of a person, He looks **deep** into the **heart** and when He sees what He is looking for, **He turns nobodies into somebodies!** You don’t have to be a teenager to find this is good news! To discover that God is **not** looking for *perfect people*; that kind of puts our name **back in the hat**, doesn’t it? **You bet it does!** When all the **external** qualifications get tossed, then the focus goes back to where it should – **the heart!**

9) **SPIRITUALITY!** So what was it about David’s heart that so *impressed* God? The 1st quality that made David so **useable**, was what we call **spirituality!** To be a person who is ‘*after God’s own heart*’, means that you are a person whose life is working towards *being in harmony* with the Lord. It’s having decided that *whatever is important to Him, is important to you*. ...what **burdens** Jesus, **burdens** you! When He says, “**Go to the right**” – you ask Him to take your hand and lead you to the right! When He says “**That’s wrong - stop that,**” you *repent* and ask the Spirit to **empower you to stop it!** That’s bottom-line Christianity! Having **spirituality**, meant David was *sensitive* to the things of God. *Are we?* In 2<sup>nd</sup> **Chronicles** we are told, (16:9) “**For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His...**”

10) **OPEN!** Now don’t get me wrong: 1) I am **not** suggesting we have to already “be there” – completely “**in tune**” with God before He can use us! We’d **never** accomplish that if it were left up to *us*! But **God can** do the impossible and *transform* in us what we *cannot* fix ourselves! We cannot **manufacture** this spirituality ourselves, but we can **open our heart** to the Holy Spirit who can! David did **not** earn “**brownie points**” with God because of his *own creative powers* – it was **God** who first **sought out** David, **not** the other way around. But David **recognized** God’s *miracle working Spirit*, which **opened his heart** to God, and *then* his desire was to be concerned about the things

that **God** was concerned about! Don't worry about **being perfect enough** – none of us are! Instead, let's ask ourselves if we are **open** to God's will? Are we  moldable clay, **willing** to be shaped by His hands? Have we **surrendered** ourselves that God might develop  within us  the quality of spirituality?

**11) DEGREE?** And secondly, 2) God's love for us is *not affected* by the **degree** of our spiritual response. I'll say it for the thousandth time: *There is nothing you can do that will make God you more, and nothing you can do to make God love you less!* **HE JUST LOVES YOU!** But, there **IS** something you **CAN DO** to be more  useable  to God! See, God **loved** Jesse's other 7 sons just as much as He **loved** David – but their  hearts  prevented them from being  used  by God to build His kingdom. The **more** you invite Christ in to come live within your heart – the **more** He can move towards  fulfilling  your Spiritual potential. The **more** He brings  your will  into alignment with  His own , the **more** lost sheep you touch with **His love!** God's  love for us  remains **constant** and is **not affected** by the **degree** of our spiritual response, but our  productivity  is! Our ability to be **true disciples** increases  dramatically  when we **open our hearts** to the  power  of the Holy Spirit!

**12) HUMILITY!** The 2nd quality God placed in David's heart that would make Him become a great king, was **Humility!**  Long before  Samuel arrived on Jesse's doorstep, the **Spirit of God** had arrived and placed within David a **servant's heart!** Fact is, God doesn't care about us having a  slick public image ,  a certain temperament , or  a lot of charisma ! He doesn't care about  external beauty ,  size , or an  impressive track record . But God does care about **character!** Are we deeply **authentic** in our spiritual faith walk, or are we  faking  it? And are we a **true servant?** Because  true  servants are **humble**.  Servants  do what God says. They don't rebel. They  respect  those in charge. And they **serve** faithfully and quietly. Like David,  servants  don't care about **getting the glory** for what they do. The  glory  is **God's!** As  true servant  we have only one goal: to make the person we serve **look better** and **be even more successful**. A  servant  just wants to get the job done! So even when David's brothers go off to battle the Philistines, David willingly stayed and tended the sheep, because he had a **humble servant's heart!**

**13) INTEGRITY!** The third quality the Spirit had created already within David was **integrity!** Look at **Psalm 78:70-72**, "**He chose David his servant and took him from the sheep pens; from tending the sheep he brought him to be shepherd of his people Jacob, of Israel His inheritance. And David shepherded them with integrity of heart, with skillful hands he led them.**" That word **integrity** is key! Someone once said "**Integrity is what you are when no one is looking!**" It means being **bone-deep honest**. **Integrity** is a **rare thing** in a world that cares only about making a " good impression !" But a woman or man of God knows you can never  fake it  with the Almighty! Fact is, the  inward  qualities God looks at – like spirituality, humility, and **integrity** – take time and discipline to cultivate.

**14) SOLITUDE!** Notice also, the  training ground  God used to make David into a leader. *It may surprise you.* For instance, **1)** God trained David in **solitude**. Before he would lead the  public , he would spend a lot of time  alone ! Out on the gentle slopes near Bethlehem, David spent his days  alone  with the sheep. Yet, despite its **nurturing qualities**, modern man seems deafly **afraid** of **solitude!** We arrive home and

*immediately* turn on the radio or TV! Could it be that we're struggling with *deep, unresolved conflicts* in our inner life, and we aren't *comfortable* being "alone with ourselves?" Do we think *noise* can drown out our discomfort with ourselves? Someone once asked, "***If you can't stand to be alone with yourself, why would you subject us to that same person?***" **Solitude** should be *sought out*, so we can address our issues – until we are **comfortable** with whom we are. David sat for many nights in **solitude** under the starry skies. He faced the *blustery winds* of autumn, the *cold rains* of winter, the *burning rays* of summer – in **solitude**. **Solitude** is one of the ways God teaches and trains young leaders – like He did with David!

**15) OBSCURITY!** Secondly, David grew up in **Obscurity!** Most servant leaders started out first *unknown, unseen, unappreciated, and unapplauded*. But it is in **obscurity** that character is built. Strange as it seems, those who first accept the *silence of obscurity* are *best qualified* to handle the **applause of popularity**.

**16) MONOTONY!** Thirdly, David was trained in **Monotony**. David was learning to be faithful in the *menial, insignificant, routine, regular, unexciting, uneventful* daily tasks of this **plain old dull** thing we call **life!** Which is like... **flying!** Pilots say flying is nothing more than *hours and hours* of **monotony**, punctuated by a few seconds of **sheer panic**. Yet that's one of God favorite training methods – and where ... in the *constant, unchanging, endless* hours, with *nobody around*, when *nobody else notices*, when *no one else cares...* you learn to be a **faithful woman or man** of God. It is in the training ground of **monotony** that servant-kings are created!

**17) REALITY!** Fourthly, David was trained in **Reality!** Life with the sheep was **not** always *uneventful!* There were *challenges* – constant **attacks** from bears and lions. David learned to *confront threats* and *deal with death*. This would prepare Him to deal later on with leading *greater* battles and overcoming the *challenges* of leadership. David was dealing with **reality** long before he faced Goliath, the giant.

**18) SERVANT KING!** Hummm... I want you (confirmands) to ask yourself: Does *solitude, obscurity, monotony, and harsh reality* ever describe **your** life? And yet, David's humble beginnings remind us that these conditions are often **the training ground** for the making of **servant kings!** Could God be training you to be a **servant king?** While you reflect on this question, remember these two points:

- **It is in the little things and in the lonely places that God meets us and equips us so as to prove ourselves capable of the big things.** If you have ever dreamed of being a person with a big **servant-king** vision, you must cultivate the habit of doing the *little things* well. The way you fill out those *detailed reports*, the way you take care of those *daily assignments*, the way you do your *chores* at home, or your *homework* for school – that will reflect if you are *willing and ready* to "**servant-king it**" for God! When **no one is watching** – how do handle what is given you! Let us not forget – **God is watching, always!** He's looking *in here* (touch heart)... and as soon as He sees you **are** learning His lessons in the simple *everyday* tasks, He will unleash you to effectively building His kingdom as a **servant king!**

- **Secondly, when God develops our inner qualities, He's never in a hurry.** David received his anointing that night, but *headed back* to the fields, (God's training ground), **the next day**. He would not become a **servant-King** for years to come, meanwhile there were **lessons** to learn. And God would not be **rushed**. One pastor described the Christian life this way: "**The conversion of a soul is the miracle of a moment, the manufacture of a Saint is the task of a life-time.**" When God works on our character, He takes His **time**! He's never in a hurry!

**19) AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART!** Friends, (especially you Confirmants) listen to these amazing words: **God has been looking for you! For you have the potential to do great things for God!** You may not know what those great things are at this moment in time, but rest assured they will come. In the meantime, **rejoice** in the fact that **you have** what God is looking for! Open your heart this morning that His Spirit can fill you with the gifts of **spirituality, humility, and integrity!** Your Lord isn't looking for the beautiful people, the brilliant people, not even the successful people – He's looking for people who are **after God's own heart**. *Is that you?* Can you sense Him turning you into servant-Kings through the training grounds of 1) solitude, 2) obscurity, 3) monotony, and 4) reality! This is how God turns what the world calls "**nobodies**" into spiritual "**somebodies!**" Let us remember that Christ is lovingly patience and *will not be hurried* – but He is **dedicated** to turning those of us with open hearts into men and women who, like David, are **after God's own heart!**

**Praise God!**

**AMEN**

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**Sermon/Confessional Prayer:**

Dear Heavenly Father, we confess that while we WANT to believe that You *have* been looking for *us* and that *we* have the potential to do great things for you – we struggle to accept it, because the world has suggested we are not worthy or capable or perfect enough. Forgive us for forgetting that you do not look at our outward appearances but instead search out our hearts. Help us Lord, come live within us, that our hearts may be filled with spirituality, humility, and integrity – and that we might be transformed into servant kings!

Lord, forgive us when we look at our life – often surrounded by solitude, obscurity, monotony, and harsh reality – and wonder if we have been forgotten or passed over. Help us to see that this is the training ground by which you turn nobodies into somebodies. Forgive us for being impatient with your transformation process, and help us to surrender ourselves completely to you that we may become servants that are after Your own heart!

And now Lord, although you know us better than we know ourselves, listen as we share in a moment of silence, those other parts of our lives that need to be forgiven, washed clean, healed, and recommitted to you! (made anew.)

(Silence)

Lord, though the world seeks out only the beautiful, brilliant, and successful people of the world, we take great comfort in knowing you look past our outward appearances and deeply into our hearts. Though we are far from perfect, we pray that you would see within us an increasing desire to do great things for you as dedicated servants. Like David, help us to be faithful in the little things that we might grow into servant kings that bring Glory to you in everything we say and do! In Jesus Name We Pray. AMEN

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**Assurance of Forgiveness:**

Friends, listen to the good news: The Lord, who seeks out those who are after His own heart, ...that Lord has mercifully heard your confession and eagerly forgives you all your sins. Go now, and remember: God does not judge a book by its cover – but looks into the very heart! Let us also not judge others or ourselves by our outwards appearances, but seek what God seeks: to be servants after His own heart! Praise God! AMEN

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**Opening prayer:**

Dear Heavenly Father, we come here this morning to worship you because through your Son and the cross you have saved us and made us your own! But we also realize that after salvation comes the call to discipleship, and we have been reminded again this week of just how far we have to go to become the servants your design calls us to be. We enter into your Holy presence knowing that we have sinned again this week, but that love, mercy, and forgiveness await us here. We carry in our small and large burdens, knowing you wish to lighten our load. We bring our questions and confusion, knowing that you have wisdom and guidance to pour down upon us. We offer the wounds and illnesses in our heart, mind, and body to you, knowing that you are the source of healing. Our battered or broken dreams and relationships we lay at your feet, knowing that your love is the glue that can repair and transform them so as to more perfectly reflect your will. Embrace us this morning, bring our hearts into alignment with your own. Teach us, empower us, and love us, that we may be like David, servants after Your own heart! In Jesus Name We Pray! AMEN!