

After God's Own Heart: David in the Shadows  
10.30.2022

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Good morning, Church

It is great to be back with you this morning, if we haven't had the chance to meet my name is Rob, I am one of the ministers on staff here at WellSpring, specifically I work with our Middle School and High School Students.

This morning I am excited to continue in the series Barry opened for us last week we have titled "After God's Own Heart" –

Our focus in this series is on the Person of David,

David, who was chosen by God to lead His people as King of Israel, is known in faith and history as many different titles: Psalmist, King, Shepard Boy, Giant Slayer, etc.

But the main description of David which is acting as our focus point during this series is "A man after God's own heart".

A few months back, Andy and I sat down to plan through the teaching for October through December and nail down where we wanted to go during this season as a church. We landed on the person of David and this title "After God's own heart" – but it was met with a very interesting conversation that I think flows well into the message today.

As Andy and I were talking through this series, it occurred to us that we had two different views of what that title means:

On one hand, After God's own Heart – sounds like it means to be created and based off God's own heart. Meaning that David reflected the heart of God and God noticed those similarities between them. David was after God's own heart like a person molded by the creator after that model. After God's own heart on one hand means to look most like God.

I have always thought of that phrase differently

To me, I always thought about placing the word chasing in front of those words.

David was a man who was chasing after God's own heart. In all he did as a worshipper, as a king, as a man, he was chasing after God's heart hoping to be more like Him in all areas of his life. David's desire was to look like God.

So, the two ideas we, at first, wrestled with was this series about David as a man who looks like God, or is this series about David as a man who is trying to look like God?

Why can't David be both?

A man who looks like God in his heart but also is chasing God in all areas. In fact, is that not the model we want for our lives anyways? Because we are fallen human beings who consistently falls short of the glory of God, yet can't that be true along with us chasing the heart of God with all we are?

I believe in the scripture that is what we see in David.

In fact, I know that God sees David's heart at the very beginning when he was chosen by Samuel in the house of Jesse. Samuel says **in 1 Samuel 16:7**

**But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."**

Here is the biblical proof that David had a heart that God focused in on and saw was good. His heart was after God.

But this morning I want to take our focus towards the other reality of not just David but all of us: That David is flawed like us and must chase after the heart of God because without God David is lost.

The goal of not just this message but really this entire series for me was not just to educate us on who David was, although that is important,

But the important thing for me is to, I guess, humanize David for us.

I think for a lot of us we have taken David and lifted him on a pedestal that is right near who God is, and I think there is a lot of biblical evidence and storylines that back that view up, but I also wonder how powerful a change it could be for us to see ourselves in David more too.

David was after God's own heart, even when he had to chase it down with all He was. And sometimes he failed. But that doesn't have to change who he was at the heart.

Open your bibles up to the book of 2 Samuel and go to chapter 11. We will find ourselves mainly in this passage for our time together this morning.

This passage outlines the story of David, king of Israel, and a woman named Bathsheba.

Some of you have heard this story before and are familiar with it. I can tell because of the way you flinched, nodded, or perked up at the sound of her name.

There is something in the failure of others that peaks our attention.... I wonder why that is?

(Paul Friskney Story)

The story of David and Bathsheba is sort of like that, everything I do isn't helping story. Everything done seems to make everything worse.

Here is what I am going to do, I am going to read us the entire story of David and Bathsheba, so if you are unfamiliar, you can know what we are examining, and so that if you have heard it a million times you can hear it a million and 1 times because our Creator uses scripture repeatedly to show you and I knew things.

11 In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, <sup>3</sup> and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite."<sup>4</sup> Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her monthly uncleanness.) Then she went back home. <sup>5</sup> The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

<sup>6</sup> So David sent this word to Joab: "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent him to David. <sup>7</sup> When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab was, how the soldiers were and how the war was going. <sup>8</sup> Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." So, Uriah left the palace, and a gift from the king was sent after him. <sup>9</sup> But Uriah slept at the entrance to the palace with all his master's servants and did not go down to his house.

<sup>10</sup> David was told, "Uriah did not go home." So, he asked Uriah, "Haven't you just come from a military campaign? Why didn't you go home?"

<sup>11</sup> Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in tents,<sup>[a]</sup> and my commander Joab and my lord's men are camped in the open country. How could I go to my house to eat and drink and make love to my wife? As surely as you live, I will not do such a thing!"

<sup>12</sup> Then David said to him, "Stay here one more day, and tomorrow I will send you back." So, Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. <sup>13</sup> At David's invitation, he ate and drank with him, and David made him drunk. But in the evening Uriah went out to sleep on his mat among his master's servants; he did not go home.

<sup>14</sup> In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. <sup>15</sup> In it he wrote, "Put Uriah out in front where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die."

<sup>16</sup> So while Joab had the city under siege, he put Uriah at a place where he knew the strongest defenders were. <sup>17</sup> When the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of the men in David's army fell; moreover, Uriah the Hittite died.

<sup>18</sup> Joab sent David a full account of the battle. <sup>19</sup> He instructed the messenger: “When you have finished giving the king this account of the battle, <sup>20</sup> the king’s anger may flare up, and he may ask you, ‘Why did you get so close to the city to fight? Didn’t you know they would shoot arrows from the wall? <sup>21</sup> Who killed Abimelek son of Jerub-Besheth<sup>[b]</sup>? Didn’t a woman drop an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died in Thebez? Why did you get so close to the wall?’ If he asks you this, then say to him, ‘Moreover, your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead.’”

<sup>22</sup> The messenger set out, and when he arrived, he told David everything Joab had sent him to say. <sup>23</sup> The messenger said to David, “The men overpowered us and came out against us in the open, but we drove them back to the entrance of the city gate. <sup>24</sup> Then the archers shot arrows at your servants from the wall, and some of the king’s men died. Moreover, your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead.”

<sup>25</sup> David told the messenger, “Say this to Joab: ‘Don’t let this upset you; the sword devours one as well as another. Press the attack against the city and destroy it.’ Say this to encourage Joab.”

<sup>26</sup> When Uriah’s wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. <sup>27</sup> After the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the Lord.

I don’t know a lot of things, but I know for certain that this story and situation was a large mark on the King’s heart. I know that the heart of God is not like David’s.

I am unsure of all your pasts and stories and experiences, but I can assure you that there are stories if written as eloquently that would paint our hearts with dark spots all over it just like David’s heart is painted here.

I have heard the story of David and Bathsheba many times, and each time I hear it, it seems like I am being given a bulleted list off all the things David did wrong here and all the way not to be like David.

I just find that so interesting because if you ask me there is nothing, I want more than to be a man after God’s own heart, but as soon as there is a major break, as

soon as the image becomes distorted, as soon as a failure is recognized, we lower our attraction to that person.

There is something in the failure of others that piques our interest.

That's because when other people fall short of the Glory of God or have a dark mark written on their heart and story, we begin to see ourselves in that person more. We confuse enjoyment of suffering and justice with a comfort in realizing we are who they are too. Lost and broken followers of God chasing after his heart and tripping along the way.

So, as we break down this famous story you have 2 options:

- Be heartbroken that a good man has failed
- Be encouraged that even during great failure, David is still after God's own heart.

For me, I tend to fall into both of those options, hurting for David but being blessed by Grace.

A lot of people think David's massive mistake, or the big moral failure was his sleeping with Bathsheba.

That was wrong, and a failure, but it was not the first one mentioned in this passage.

Verse 1 says that at the time when kings go off to war, David remained in Jerusalem.

In the spring, **at the time when kings go off to war**, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But **David remained in Jerusalem.**

David was supposed to be at war with his military leading and fighting for the Lords army, but he decided, for whatever reason, he would allow others to go and fight in his place.

A lot of us think the story of David and Bathsheba is a story about the danger of lust, and it is, but I think it is far more about the danger of attention.

You see all the sin and failure that follows in this story are preceded by David having his attention somewhere it shouldn't have been.

Don't get tricked into believing that David was focusing on Bathsheba and that was the problem, the real problem was not where David's focus ended up, but where it wasn't in the first place.

God desired David's attention to be fighting for His people, but David decided to stay back.

I think these paints a clear picture of something we do all the time but fail to see as a missed opportunity. We get so caught up in what we do wrong as individuals, spouses, followers of Christ, but we don't look at just saying no to God as a missed step. But at the root of every. Single. Problem. That arose for David, was the reality that is he had just been where God wanted him, none of it would have happened.

If you and I would just have our attention where God wants it, we wouldn't even give the enemy a chance to take our attention elsewhere.

If this story of David teaches us anything it is that when God calls for our attention, we need to give it to Him. Not simply because he deserves it, but because it is what is best for us.

The next thing that happens is David notices Bathsheba on the roof.

Off in the distance later in the evening when nobody is around, David saw a beautiful woman and decided he wanted that beautiful women for himself. In a move of lust David called her to him. He even realized who she was and that she was married, but he didn't care. He had his mind made up. The king gets what he wants.

This is the part of the story I don't think anyone talks about enough

David was King and Bathsheba was a woman in the city. In a time where men already had an unfair power and status advantage over women, the king called for a woman to come to him. Let me be very clear, whether she really wanted to go to David or not we don't know, but I assure you she didn't have much choice.

The heart shattering reality is that David used his power, privilege, and position to get something he wanted. My goodness to a wish that didn't still happen today, but we see it all the time. There are many people who have been hurt or effected by this reality, for that I want to stop here and say I am so sorry. It is wrong and destructive and as much as it hurts that this man used his power to cause much harm, I hope you can find some comfort in knowing that God heart is not like that. We know God's heart is not like that because David faced major consequences for his actions here. Including God taking the life of the child he and Bathsheba had together.

I think the temptation is to say I am glad David got what he deserved, but that isn't the bell I am ringing by saying God cares enough to punish him. The hope is not that all people who do wrong will get what they deserve, that's up to God and not us, the hope is that we can see God's heart and plan through that justice. God punishing David and holding him accountable to his actions shows us that the assault and power abuse is not in Gods original plan, and He hates it. If you have felt the pain of this kind of situation in your own life, both women and men, I pray you'll find comfort in knowing Gods heart for you did not intend that hurt.

I was talking with Andy about this, and he raised an incredible point to me that changed my perspective.

David was an extremely powerful man who was able to see a beautiful woman and say, "I want that woman right here in front of me" and boom, there she is.

This is a man after Gods own heart that can do that, and he had a lot of power and ability to do so.

Flash forwards a few thousand years and here we are \*pull out cell phone\*

With the power and ability to snap our fingers and boom, there they are.



We are three clicks away from the access David the king had.

We have more power and access now than any other time in history

Don't fool yourself for a moment into thinking you are just going to be strong enough or good enough to withstand the temptations that brings.

David, a man after God's own heart, did this thousands of years ago.

Lesser men and women now with more power are going to fall short in this way.

So be proactive. First with your attention, if its where God wants it to be it won't be here.

But more than that, let me throw my student minister hat on for a moment:

Please watch your kids' phones.

There are plenty of incredible software's and security measures that can go on there today.

A grown strong King of God's people fell short with too much power and access.

I promise a 12–18-year-old with more access and power won't automatically be safe from that reality.

But let me be clear it is not just students. Adults, families, spouses, friend groups, get in a safe environment with the software's and the accountability with others because with power and access come a massive responsibility.

The rest of this story is built very much on shame.

After the act with Bathsheba everything David does is simply to cover up what He did.

He brings Uriah, Bathsheba's husband back from war so that he will lay with his wife and then it will look like they had the baby and David can get away with what he did.

When Uriah refuses because he is a good man who doesn't believe he deserves to lay with his wife while his brothers in arms are out fighting, David has him killed by sending him alone to the front lines.

Shame is a powerful feeling.

According to the traumatic stress institute

The feeling of shame can be described as a sense of smallness, worthlessness, and powerlessness in each situation. It is triggered by a "perceived" break in one's connectedness to others or to oneself. This is compounded by feeling exposed and extremely concerned about another's evaluation of oneself. Shame can be defined as the emotional experience of another's disdain or disgust, real or imagined.

For David, he knew what people would think of Him because of what he did with Bathsheba, so he did everything in his power to keep it from coming to light.

The break of connectedness between oneself or others.

When we do something out of character, we immediately feel separated from others. That separation leads to hiding, lying, and more shame.

It is a cycle of wrong decisions caused by an overwhelming feeling of inadequacy.

I believe the only antidote is to realize that ALL fall short of the glory of God. Just as Christ has had grace for you and me, He has Grace also for others. Shame is what hold us back from where God wants us. Because shame is the thing that draws our attention back to our failure.

God doesn't want you to live in a cycle of shame and fear of what others think.

God wants your attention to be back on Him, especially after a failure, because He has SO much more work to do that we are missing out on because we are so worried someone is going to find out what we did.

I think almost all this message today has felt like I am telling you not to do something you shouldn't do. It's true, I am telling you to run from those sinful situations, but what I think David's story here is far more about is that it's not about what you did wrong then it's about what you do right now.

All fall short of the Glory of God.

But there is grace. Upon grace. Upon grace.

When I was in bible college I was working as a 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at a church about 35 minutes from my school. The appeal to work there was my old student minister was my boss. I loved it and it was a great church.

One Saturday night, I had this realization that my life wasn't walking in the direction that God wanted it. My behaviors, the way I carried myself, it wasn't looking like how I or God wanted it to look. I called my mentor and boss and told him I wouldn't be in tomorrow and I was going to leave bible college and just go do something else more fitting for me. He said these words to me which have stuck with me ever since.

If everyone in ministry who made a mistake decided to quit, we would have no ministers.

If everyone in ministry who made a mistake decided to quit, we would have no ministers.

That's true not just for those in ministry but for you also.

If every believer who failed decided to give up, the church would fall.

Even David, a man after God's own heart, fell short, but he was still the King of Israel and still had a long journey with God after that major failure.

You and I after our failures can walk in the shadows like David in our shame, or we can step up and keep chasing Gods heart with our lives.

You can choose to be upset that you heart doesn't look like it's based after God's own heart, or you can choose to continue, considering what we have done, to live after Gods own heart. Tripping along the way but running after him all the same.

Close and call to Grace

Romans 8:1 – There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus