

THE EARLY YEARS OF THE LIFE OF DAVID

Why the Young Adult Worship Movement Must Connect with the Life of the Man After God's Own Heart

As a **young movement** comprised mostly of **young individuals** the early years of the life of King David are invaluable to us. History is full of history shaping movements that were pioneered by young adults. And history is full of testimonies of their lack of wisdom and inability to stay the course. We want to study the life of David – specifically his early years – to connect with **the theology of faithfulness** that we might obtain **clarity, focus, passion and endurance** for **longevity** in this calling that we have said “yes” to; first to be a man or a woman after God's heart and second to establish the House of Prayer in the cities of the earth. God promised through Jeremiah that at the end of the age He would give the gift of leaders with hearts like David to the church to shepherd them (3:15). I believe many of these individuals are alive on the earth right now and that they need to be called forth through the preaching and teaching on the life, theology and ministry of David.

I. WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO STUDY THE LIFE OF DAVID: DAVID A MODEL OF OBEDIENCE AND PRIVILEGE

- A. There is more Scripture about King David than any other person except for Jesus. He's the only man in history that God recorded from youth to death in such explicit detail. The Lord gave us so much information about David because He intends to set his testimony before the people of the covenant as the premier example of what it means to be in covenantal relationship with God: both obedience and privilege.
- B. Despite David's profound failures the Holy Spirit declares him to be a model of obedience and faithfulness.

He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.' (Acts 13:22)

David after he had served his own generation BY THE WILL OF GOD, fell asleep...(Acts 13:36)

David after he had served the PURPOSE OF GOD in his own generation, fell asleep... (ESV/NAS)

- C. David received this assessment of his life after he died because David understood something that few people do: the reality of God's steadfast mercy towards the sincere. David's life is so valuable to study not only to learn from his obedience and faithfulness but to learn from his failures and the way in which he responded to the Lord in the wake of them. What we learn from David's failures is to trust in God's mercy towards us and to run to Him and not away from him when we stumble in sin. David is the “poster child” of what it means to live in the New Covenant and to experience the affections of God in our immaturity as we grow.

(ASV) ...I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people, a leader and commander for the people. (Isaiah 55:3–4)

(ESV) ...my steadfast, sure love for David. (Isaiah 55:3)

(NASB) ...According to the faithful mercies shown to David. (Isaiah 55:3)

II. DAVID'S LIFELONG PURSUIT OF FAITHFULNESS: 3 SEASONS IN THE LIFE OF DAVID

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- A. In these sessions we're going to look at David's lifelong pursuit of faithfulness to God in the changing seasons of his life. I define "faithfulness to God" (in this context) in these terms: **Intimacy** (authenticity/revelation/passion/affection/obedience) with God and **meekness** (integrity/holiness/humility/mercy/justice/compassion) before men.

He also chose David His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds; 71 from following the ewes...He brought him, to shepherd...Israel His inheritance. 72 So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands. (Ps. 78:70–72)

- B. In these sessions we're going to look at David's pursuit of faithfulness in three primary seasons of his life. Though seasons recapitulate to some degree throughout his life they serve to show us the primary transitions that David experienced throughout his years. These changes are the same changes that we will experience (to varying degrees) throughout our lives:
1. The Years of **Obscurity and Hiddenness** when he faced the Mundane (the Bethlehem years)
 2. The Years of **Promotion and Prominence** when he faced Challenges and Pressure (the Gibeah years; as well as Hebron and Jerusalem)
 3. The Years of **Suffering and Mistreatment** when he faced Perplexity and Loss (the Adullam Years)
- C. These seasons occurred between the age of 16 and 30 for David. This was his experience as a young adult. And as we are a movement comprised of mostly young adults and a movement that is largely predicated on David's theology and ministry of day and night worship we would be wise to study David's "wonder years."
- D. The season that preceded David's 30th birthday was his "internship." After the Adullam years David was anointed King in Hebron over one tribe of Israel (2 Sam. 2–5; age: from 30–37 years old). And 7 years later he was anointed King over all the tribes in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6–24; age: from 37–70 years old).

III. AN OUTLINE OF 1 SAMUEL

Chapters 1–7: Samuel's Early Years

Chapters 8–15: Samuel and Saul

Chapters 16–31: David and Saul

The Bethlehem Years (age 16/17): **Chapters 16–17**

The Anointing at Bethlehem: Chapter 16

The Slaying of Goliath: Chapter 17

The Gibeah Years (age 18–23): **Chapters 18–20**

David's Sudden Rise to Fame and the Beginning of the Conflict with Saul: Chapter 18

Saul's Attempts to Kill David: Chapters 19–20

The Adullam Years (age 23–30): **Chapters 21–31**

David Flees to Nob and Lies to Ahimelech the Priest: Chapter 21

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David Flees to the Cave of Adullam and Saul Slaughters the Priests at Nob: Chapter 22

David Saves the City of Keith: Chapter 23

David Spares Saul's Life: Chapter 24

Abigail and Nabla: Chapter 25

David Spares Saul Again: Chapter 26

David Flees to Ziklag: Chapter 27

Saul Consults a Medium at En-Dor: Chapter 28

The Philistines Reject David: Chapter 29

Ziklag Burns to the Ground, David Repents and is Restored: Chapter 30

The Death of Saul: Chapter 31

IV. THE THEOLOGY OF PROVIDENTIAL PREPARATION: CONNECTING WITH THE REALITY THAT GOD LOVINGLY TRAINS US THROUGH LIFE'S CIRCUMSTANCES

- A. An integral theological reality that is laced throughout the life of David is the idea that God was active in leading David to train him. This training was aimed to bring David forth in **intimacy with God** and **meekness before men**. Central to David's revelation of God was his conviction that God was sovereign over his life circumstances and deliberate about training David's heart in love and obedience:

"...the Lord will fulfill His purpose for me." (Psalm 138:8)

"I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills His purpose for me." (Psalm 57:2)

- B. Because David viewed God as sovereign and because He understood his life's circumstances as being under the direction of God's affectionate plans and purposes he lived as though God was his source in all things. This is one of the most foundational realities that we come in contact with when we study the life of David.
- C. Most people live as though **people** are the source of the things they desire (honor, position, finances, possessions, affirmation, affection, etc.) and not **God**. And if people are seen as the source of the things we desire then people are seen as the reason we don't get them when we want them. People naturally view people as the source of their promotion or demotion, release or resistance and honor or mistreatment. And living like this will destroy us and all of our relationships. We live in constant conflict with ourselves and with everyone around as we take things into our own hands.
- D. David's life is a testimony concerning the faithfulness of God to care for us and to fulfill His promises to us. When Samuel came to David's house for dinner the whole family had to wait for David to be called from the fields before eating. No one knew David except for God. And that was enough. When Saul sought to kill David, the ones closest to David counseled him to kill Saul. They said "God has given him into your hands!" And David's response was, "And I will relinquish it and place my future back in his hands." David knew that taking his future into his hands was disastrous.

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- E. David's ability to respond in meekness to promotion and mistreatment is rivaled in Scripture only by Jesus. David cultivated grace that enabled him to entrust himself to God's providential leadership when he was a shepherd, a fugitive and a King.

if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a grace from God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. (1 Peter 2:20–23)

- F. David was anointed to become King when he was 16. But he didn't step into that prophecy until he was 37. Between 16 and 37 David was trained under God's providential leadership. During those years he was hunted by Saul and 3,000 hired bounty hunters who were employed by the government to assassinate him. As he was being buffeted by this formidable enemy he was preserved through the revelation that Saul was not the one ultimately responsible for releasing or withholding favor and blessings.
- G. As young adults who wish to be men and women "after the Lord's heart" we must submit to the Lord's process of training with a vision for long term engagement throughout all the ebbs and flows of the ever changing landscape of life's circumstances. We must get a vision for staying steady in promotion and in demotion without losing intimacy or humility.
- H. Promotion will test us to the same degree that demotion does just in different ways. The way we respond in promotion will be the way we respond in demotion and vice versa. Honor buffets us differently than mistreatment does, but it's just as difficult to maintain a life in God in the midst of it.