

## How To Live For One When No One's Looking (Part 2) – 1 Sam 16

Last week we began unpacking our theme for the year – **Live For One**, fr 1 Cor 10:31 . . .

We started with a slice from David's life found in 1 Sam 16, to figure out how to live for One even when no one is looking (turn there)

Hopefully you recall **THE STORY** . . .

That while shepherding in relative obscurity, David is called and chosen as king over Israel. But rather than leading right away, he returns to shepherding, and then faithfully serves Saul with his musical abilities

- But before we could focus on the application for our lives, we first had to deal with two issues (**THE ISSUES**) from this passage  
2 issues that could erode our confidence in God/Word if we're not careful

The first was *concealing the truth* from v2 (**Verse 2 – Concealing the truth**)

Where God told Samuel to conceal the truth in order to protect his life, and the purpose for which he was sending him

The second was *the providence of God over evil* from v14

(**Verse 14 – The providence of God over evil**)

Where I laid out 6 principles fr Scriptures that describe God's sovereignty over evil . . .  
And help you understand the fact that God sent an evil spirit to torment Saul

Rather than re-visit those issues, I'd encourage you to pick up last week's message either online or at the "Books and Things" table in the lobby

- That said, we can now move on to **THE APPLICATION**, and how to live for One when no one's looking; Or when no one cares; Or when your situation is obscure

Have you ever been there? I think so, b/c so much of our life is lived that way – in obscurity; alone; away from the scrutiny of others

But that doesn't mean we're off the hook in glorifying God – *whatever you do, do all to the glory of God*, even when no one's looking

And it starts, as with all things, with your heart

If you're going to live for One when no one's looking, you must . . .

**Guard your heart (v7)**

It's the most fundamental principle to apply in this case

Because though no one else may see it, God does

Though no one else may be looking, God is

And he sees right through to the core (read v7)

*The heart* – the essence of who you are; the seat of your emotions; your character, passions, motives, desires

It's the core of who u are, encompassing the things only God can see w/ perfect clarity

Things you must guard with your life, even when no one's looking – b/c God *is*

And he sees all – inside and out

- Not only that, but he's looking for those who will *give* him their all  
Like the prophet Hanani told King Asa, David's great-great grandson in **2 Chron 16:9**–

*The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him.*

Did you catch that?

God not only sees your heart when no one else does, but he's looking to *strongly support* you if it's blameless toward him

If it's clean; Forgiven; Harboring nothing wrong; Living for all that is right

If u'r going to live for One when no one's looking – u must guard your heart, especially . .

### • From pride

The anointing of a new king was a momentous event, and David wasn't even invited to the party

The prophet Samuel was coming to Beth. of all places, and he was going to sacrifice to the Lord, right there

That would be like the Olympics coming to Davenport . . .

And the President of the United States extending a personal invitation to you and your family, to join him for the opening ceremonies . . .

Except u have to stay home and baby sit, just like David had to stay home and sheep sit

Has that ever happened to you?

Have you ever been left out of something you *really* wanted to be in on?

Did you guard your heart from pride?

Or did you let it take over and then spill over in protest?

Not so with David; There wasn't a hint of it

Not one mention of him grumbling or complaining that he was left out

Not one mention of him blowing his own trumpet and telling them how much he knew, or how qualified he was, or how much he deserved to be there

In fact, even *after* he was anointed king, he went *back* to the pastures!

- It doesn't matter how talented, gifted, or knowledgeable you are . . .

If you're dead set on making sure everyone around u *knows*, you're not living for One

And there's nothing more repulsive, because it's flat out pride

Guard your heart fr that when no one's looking, so that it doesn't spill over when they *are*

Second, guard it . . .

### • From discontentment

When no one's looking, guard your heart from discontentment

From a feeling of unhappiness and dissatisfaction due to your circumstances

I'm not talking about a holy unrest from God to multiply your ministry and influence

I'm talking about an *un*-holy unrest to get out of your situation, just b/c you don't like it

There are few times when discontentment is more of a risk, than when nobody notices u, and *should*

When nobody listens to you, and should; When nobody pays attention to u, and should

When that happens, discontentment is a *huge* risk

And if u'r not careful, it will creep in before u know it, wreak havoc on your decisions

- Once again, there’s not a hint of it in David; In fact, we find just the opposite  
If there was ever a time he could have pulled rank, that would have been it  
If there was ever a time where discontentment could’ve crept in, that would have been it  
If there was ever a time when people should have been bowing to him, that was it

But they didn’t, and he didn’t care, b/c he was a man after God’s own heart – he lived 4-1  
There was no presumption, no arrogance, no unhappiness, and no discontent  
Ch 17 even indicates that after he was drafted for service by Saul, he *still* went back and forth between the pastures and the “palace” (17:20)

- Let me ask you something  
If God never chooses you for anything other than what you’re already doing – will you be happy?  
If nobody ever notices your talents or gifts – will you satisfied?  
If shepherding is all there is for you – will you be content?  
If so, you’re living for One; If not, you’re not

I had to wrestle with that as I was going into full time ministry  
And I finally committed to God that if I was never anything but a husband and father, which I was already – that would be enough  
If that was the extent of my influence for Christ and his kingdom – I was okay with that  
If that’s where God wanted me to invest 100% of my time, talent, treasure, and effort, for the rest of my life – so be it  
And lo and behold, that’s about the time God started blessing the work of my hands, and using me as a pastor

When no one’s looking at you, or notices you . . .  
Guard your heart from pride and discontentment – b/c God is  
And he’ll strongly support you if you do

Second . . .

### **Do your job (v11,19,23)**

If you want to live for One when no one’s looking – guard your heart and do your job  
That is, play your role; Fulfill your ministry; And do so . . .

### **• Faithfully**

If David was anything, he was that – faithful in doing his job  
Whether it was keeping the sheep, or playing for Saul  
If it needed to be done, and that was his role, he did it

He didn’t abdicate his responsibilities; He didn’t shirk his duty . . .  
He didn’t slack off because he was over-qualified or under-appreciated . . .  
He was faithful, dependable, and loyal – doing his job to the best of his ability, even when no one was looking  
Even though no one knew whether he led the sheep beside still waters, or not  
Whether he rested them in green pastures or brown ones

If that’s u; If you’re doing your job; fulfilling your ministry; playing your role – faithfully  
Even when no one’s looking . . .  
Then you too, are living for One; If not, you have some work to do

Do your job faithfully, and second . . .

### **• Be ready**

Ready for whatever might come up  
When no one’s looking, be ready – b/c u never know when you’re going to be *wanted*

It happened twice to David – once in v11 when he was called to the anointing ceremony  
And later in v19 when he was called to Saul’s house

I can just hear the messenger yelling at David from the next hilltop over – “Hey shepherd boy, get over here, now”  
“You’re wanted at the ceremony; You’re wanted by the king; Hope you’re ready”

And David was – ready to go from shepherd to king at a moment’s notice  
Ready to go from obscurity to notoriety, in a matter of minutes; And then *back again*  
He was ready for both

- How about you?  
Are you ready for *whatever* God might put in your path?  
Whether it’s an opp of notoriety *or* a position of obscurity?  
Are you ready for both like David was?  
I hope so – because you never know when you’re going to be wanted

And you never know when you’re going to be *needed*  
Like in v19 when Saul sent for David, because he *needed* him; He needed relief  
And v23 says – *And whenever the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand.*

Whenever he was needed – David was ready; Whenever he was wanted – he went

One of the ways to glorify God is to do your job *faithfully* when no one’s looking . . .  
And be *ready*, for when they *are*

Third . . .

### **Hone your gifts (v18)**

If you’re going to live 4-1 when no one’s looking – guard your heart, do your job, and hone your gifts

Read v18 – obviously, that didn’t happen overnight

David was an accomplished musician, a fierce soldier, a gifted writer, a wise speaker  
And on top of all that, he was full of courage and filled with poise  
None of which came without experience and practice

The same is true for you and I

If we’re going to live for One when no one’s looking, we must apply ourselves, redeem the time, and . . .

### **• Practice, practice, practice**

That’s how you hone your gifts; That’s how you sharpen your talents; Perfect your skills  
Practice, practice, practice  
And if I sound like your mom when you were taking 4<sup>th</sup> grade piano lessons . . .  
Consider yourself fortunate, because she had it right

David didn't become an accomplished musician without practice  
He didn't become a courageous warrior by avoiding conflict  
He didn't become a gifted writer without wrestling with the issues of life in the loneliness of the fields  
He didn't cultivate a heart for worship, without spending long hours pondering the things of God

He redeemed the time and honed his gifts with practice  
And he did so when no one was looking  
When his only audience was God, the stars, and the sheep  
And so must we

- Several years back I thought I was going to learn how to play the guitar  
One evening I was proudly playing "Old MacDonald Had a Farm"  
I was strumming along . . . "Farm, Dad"  
I needed more practice when no one was looking

So many people want and even expect to take their show on the road, when they haven't learned to use it alone  
When they haven't submitted it to the scrutiny of a few, before they broadcast it for the benefit of many

In fact, have you ever considered that one of the reasons no one may be looking, or noticing you . . .  
Is because God is giving you time to hone your gifts, in order to most glorify him when they do? When they *are* looking?

Hone your gifts with practice, and . . .

- **Take advantage of your obscurity**

You're never freer to do what u love, and refine your skills – than when it's u, and u alone

Take advantage of your obscurity  
Because once you're in the spotlight, *if* that's where God wants you, you'll wish u had  
Once you're on, you're on; And your practice, or lack thereof, will show

- When I became a pastor, a desire to preach began to grow  
Not because I wanted to be up in front of people  
But because I was busting at the seams with thoughts from God's word  
I was working through the book of Isaiah at the time  
And writing so many things in the margins of my Bible, that it became a mess (**page**)  
My head and heart grew so full in the course of a week, that I *had* to have an outlet  
Sometimes I would just sit there and talk to myself – as if I had people in front of me listening

So I started leading devotions for the various ministry teams for whom I was responsible  
And guess where I started? The book of Isaiah  
Then I was given my first opp to preach – in none other than a gym full of 150 convicted felons in a medium-max facility in Danville, IL  
Talk about a captive audience – poor guys; Couldn't leave no matter how bad it was

After that I started lining up opp's to preach at a rescue mission  
Called them up and said, "I'm a pastor of Adult Ministries, and I'd love to hold a worship service there at the mission, if you have any slots available"  
And then, just to sweeten the pot, I said, "And by the way, I'll bring in someone to lead worship, and I'll only preach for 25 minutes; I'll take whatever you have"

So once a month on various weeknights, I pulled about 10 guys from our church together (just in case nobody else showed up) . . .  
And ended up preaching to about 15 men from the street, who didn't have any other place to go  
And God used that time I trust, to bless them  
And to hone my gifts, in the security of obscurity

- Now, that's not everybody's story, nor should it be  
God has gifted each of us differently, and your most God-glorifying place may actually be in the fields rather than the front  
Whatever the case – take advantage of your obscurity, and practice; cultivate your skills  
Because you never know when you're going to be wanted or needed

In the meantime – (**summary slide**) guard your heart and do your job  
Because though no one else may be looking, God is  
Live for One

#### Pray

If weren't for the fact that our Redeemer lives, there wouldn't be any living for One  
In fact, there wouldn't be any living at all  
Stand and sing