

How to Live for One and Finish Strong – 1 Chron 22

We've been talking about how to live for One for about the last 8 weeks now

Studying the life of David as our example

Though this is the end of our Live For One series, this isn't the last time you'll hear about the theme – we'll continue to re-visit it from time to time

But with the end of the series, I thought we'd take a look at the end of David's life

Which we find in ch 22 of 1 Chron ([1 Chron 22](#))

It's the beginning of the end of David's life, and a great example of . . .

How to Live For One and Finish Strong

What we're going to find here, is that despite David's moral failures and the consequences that followed – God put it in his heart to build a temple for worship

And though David could have thrown in the towel at that point in his life . . .

He finished strong and made it happen

But not without much preparation ([22:1-5](#))

1 – If you read the previous chapter, you know he was standing on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite

Which happens to be the very spot of the temple mount today

If you're going to finish strong for the Lord, you must . . .

Start early (v1-5)

5 – *I will therefore make preparations for it*

It's never too soon to plan for the future

It doesn't matter if you're talking about your personal life, ministry involvement, business transfer, or the longevity and perpetuation of an organization like our church . . .

If you fail to plan, you plan to fail; If you fail to make prep's, you prepare to fail

In order to finish strong later, you must start *now*

- For David, that meant 2 things – working out a plan for a temple, and building a legacy to leave behind

After receiving a detailed layout of the temple from the Lord (1 Chron 28:11-19) . . .

He set aside an enormous amount of materials (22:3-4) . . .

And then planned all the logistics necessary to maintain it (23-27)

All of which required that he start early

That's why we're constantly trying look ahead and plan as elders

B/c based on this example, we're well aware that what we do today goes a long way toward seizing the opp's of tomorrow, and finishing strong in the end

Second, David's preparations to finish strong meant building a legacy to leave behind

For all his faults, David built a life-long legacy of perseverance, worship, & repentance

He could have quit and retired in seclusion many times over

Instead, starting at age 30, he served as king for 40 years through thick and thin

It's one of the reasons I'm committed to one life, one wife, and one ministry

B/c a long obedience in the same direction produces the most fruit

He persevered, and left a legacy of worship and repentance to show for it

What kind of legacy are *you* building?

Is it one of godliness, or sinfulness?

Is it one of commitment, or indifference? Humility, or pride?

It's an important question

B/c what you do now determines in large part what you pass on, and how u finish later

It's never too soon to start; And it's never too late to . . .

Hold loosely (v6-10)

Read [v6-10](#)

Contrary to human nature, David held loosely to his plan to build the temple himself

Maybe he realized that the magnitude of his plan exceeded the # of his days

Or maybe he realized that when you cross God, it's a lose-lose every time

Whatever the case, when God spoke, he listened, and held loosely to his plans

And we should do the same

Plan ahead, yes; And start early; But hold loosely, b/c God has the final say

For David, it wasn't just a flat-out “no” on God's part – “go back to drawing board”

He provided an alternative – a son who would build it (v9, 10)

That's the God we serve

He may not allow you to continue with your own plans . . .

But having planned in good faith, to accomplish *his* purposes, he'll provide alternative

And the key to experiencing it, is holding loosely to your own

- As I watch people grow old, it's obvious that this gets harder and harder
We get more and more set in our ways as the days go by
Instead of letting go and letting God, we hold on and make a mess of things

Flexibility seems to wane, as life wanes

And it's a sure-fire way to miss out on God's best, even though it may seem like a disappointment at first

Start early to finish strong later

But hold loosely – b/c God always has the final say

Third, from David's example, is to . . .

Encourage those who follow (v11-19)

Finishing strong doesn't *just* mean persevering in your own walk and faith

There's more to it than crossing the finish line alone

We must encourage those who come behind to do the same

And in these few paragraphs in v11-19, David models 7 ways to do so

7 Ways to Encourage Those Who Follow; Starting with a reminder of God's promises

Encourage those who follow . . .

1. *By reminding them of God's promises* ([11](#))

David was reminding Sol. of God's promise in v10 that he wd build house for his name

When the task is too big, or the finish line too far – often the best and only source of encouragement is that God has promised to do it

Encourage those who follow by reminding them of God's promises

2. *By praying for wisdom and obedience* (12)

If u know anything about Sol, you know that wisdom was a hallmark of his leadership
And no wonder, b/c David was asking God for it before he ever took the throne
Can you think of a better way to encourage those who come behind us, than to pray for their wisdom, and tell them you're doing so?

And notice the purpose – *that he would keep the law*; that he would be obedient to God
It wasn't wisdom for wisdom's sake he was praying for; But wisdom for *obedience* sake
That he would know how to *apply* the instructions of Lord, in the every day walk of life

3. *By telling them what's at stake* (13a)

Encourage those who come behind you that obedience brings blessing every time
In Sol's case, it was the blessing of prosperity; In our case, it could be anything
The point is – keeping the stakes in sight is incentive to follow on

4. *By telling them to buck up* (13b)

Sometimes that's what it takes, doesn't it? Just a simple, straightforward – “buck up”
None of this – “I hope you can find the strength;” or “Don't worry, God will help you”
All of which is true, and has it's place
But sometimes, a simple “get going” is the best encouragement we can give

5. *By investing in their future* (14-16)

100,000 talents of gold – at \$900/ounce that's \$108b
David invested heavily in Sol's future, at great personal cost
A future he would never see; Why?

B/c he was passionate about worship, and a place within which to do it – that's one reason
Another is that he knew they couldn't do it without him
He knew that great works require great sacrifice, on *everyone's* part
And he knew that his participation would be a huge encouragement to everyone else

But most of all, David was a man after God's own heart
Which meant that just like God had invested heavily in his future, he was going to do the same for those who followed

- Should that not be our heart as well?
If God has invested so heavily in our lives through the death of his Son and the presence of his Spirit . . .
Should we not have his heart and do the same for others? We should
And few things will encourage them more

And I'm not just talking about money
It could be an investment of time and effort
Or something as simple as an encouraging note from time to time

*About mid-way through my freshman year in college, I started getting notes in my mail box, that looked like they had been written by a child (**envelope**)
Sent by someone named Ed Coray

I didn't have a clue who the guy was, and could barely read them
But he wrote me the nicest notes – commending me for my play and wishing God's blessings on my life
Like this paragraph from a note dated March 5, 1987 . . . (read note)

Finally one day I mentioned it to my basketball coach
“You mean, Coach Coray?”
“That's the Coray of Coray gymnasium, the old gym on campus”
“He's about 85 years old now, and one of our biggest fans”
“You'll want to hang on to those – he's a great encourager”

So I did; And Coach Coray continued to write me notes through my senior year
And though he went home to be with the Lord in 1993, his legacy lives on in my life . . .
B/c of his investment in my future through words of encouragement

If you want to finish strong in life, encourage those who follow by investing in their future
Sometimes all it takes is a note

Six, encourage those who follow . . .

6. *By reminding them of God's blessings* (17-18)

Discouragement could have easily set in with so monumental a task ahead
And David countered it by reminding them that having blessed them in the past, God would do so in the future as well

7. *By urging them to focus* (19)

In this case, on God's will; on God's desires (v19)
Focus; Put a stake in the ground and remain firm in your resolve to seek God's will

Part of finishing strong in all that God has for *you*, is encouraging those who follow, to *do* all that God has for *them*

Start early, hold loosely, encourage those who follow, and . . .

Pass the torch (23:1)

Read 23:1 – David passed the torch, and did so *publicly*
Critical to a smooth transfer of role is a public endorsement of your successor
It's not always possible, but when it is, it's preferable

Tell your group of 3rd graders that Sally is going to teach them this coming year, and that she's great; “you'll love her”
Tell your SG that the apprentice couple is stepping in to replace you, and that they'll probably do a better job than you did

- And in the process of passing the torch – exhort/urge them to follow hard after God
Just like David did in 1 Chron 28:9-10
He didn't just pass the crown over; He exhorted Solomon to do 4 things (read it)

Do you see the 4 things he told him to do?
Know God, Serve God, Seek God, and Obey God (10b – *be strong and do it*)
When you pass the reigns to your replacement – exhort them to follow hard after God, especially in ministry

That also goes for every person who walks in these doors after you
Replacements or not – urge them to seek God’s will and follow his ways
Because if they don’t, the fire goes out
If the fire goes out – ministry stops

- That’s exactly what happened with Solomon and his son Rehoboam in 2 Chron 10
David turned a physical nation into a spiritual nation – marked by passion for God
Then he gave it to Solomon who turned a spiritual nation into a secular nation – marked
by pleasure
And he gave it to his son Rehoboam who turned a secular nation into a divided nation –
marked by animosity

And we’re at risk of the same thing in our *church*, if we don’t pass the torch of God’s
passion to those who come behind us
In our first 4 years we’ve experienced the power of God in remarkable ways
People are being saved; Last weekend alone we baptized 75 people
Lives being changed, marriages restored, and Christ exalted

But if we don’t pass that on, if we don’t pass the torch every single day, week, month,
year – to every single person who walks in these doors . . .
We will quickly become a *secular* church – obsessed more with formality than function

Oh, we’ll still believe all the right things, and probably even look the same from the
outside in . . .
But the power of God will be missing, and so will the evidence of it in our lives

If that ever happens, we’re not too far from being a divided church
Mired in animosity and confusion; Grasping at straws to make ourselves look good
Denying the power of God that established us in the first place

We must pass the torch if we’re going to finish strong . . .
And encourage those who receive it, to do the same

It’s never too soon to start, and never too late to change if you’re fire grows dim
Finish Strong and Live for One