

The Heart of God in David

Let's have a word of prayer:

Father, bless Your Word as we open it this morning that we may feed on Jesus. Thank You. In His name. Amen.

It is really an honor to be able to share with you this morning. Thank you for the opportunity. I want to introduce myself a little bit and just tell you what my approach is to the Word. I am a student of the Word like many of you. There is nothing unique about that, but I love to study the Word and in that I compare Scripture with Scripture a lot of times, seeking the Lord, seeking to have Him enlighten the Word to me. You know what that means; you know what that is. It is alive; it comes to us, and in that we pull out God's truth, and it just has this ring in our hearts of the truth of that. I try not to ever read into the Scriptures, try to come with a preconceived idea and try to prove some point as I look at the Scriptures, but I am always trying to draw out of the Scriptures.

The sources that I used as a young Christian were secondary sources mostly such as commentaries and different books. As I find myself getting older and older in the Lord, I am using secondary sources less and less. I do refer to secondary sources because I am interested in seeing the light that they saw in the Scriptures, what truth was revealed to their hearts, and sometimes as a verification of something that I have seen, and to see if somebody else saw the same thing.

Finally, theologically I keep a very tight grip on the colors of faith. There are certain things about the faith that you need to hold onto very carefully with a strong grip—the errancy of the Word, Jesus, the virgin birth, death on the cross, the uprecea of that death on our behalf. I keep a really strong grip on that, but when it comes to secondary truths or positions or issues in the Scriptures I keep a really light grip on things like that. I used to hold things very dearly, some things that I learned as a young Christian, but I find myself evolving with the Lord. He is changing me and showing new things to me and to all of us. So I keep a very loose

grip on those kind of things because after all those positions have usually been propagated or established by some man or school of theology. The best of men are finite, but we are dealing with an infinite God who is alive and revealing things, so I keep a light grip. I am not coming here this morning with any theological position or anything that I am trying to propagate. In fact I might offend some people here by the things I am going to share but that is fine.

I want to share on David this morning, but specifically I want to look at the first seven years of his public ministry. Some commentaries think it is seven years. But approximately seven years from the date that he was anointed by Samuel to the time that he takes the throne over the united Israel is a seven years' period of time. It covers from I Samuel 16 to II Samuel chapters 4-5 when Ishbosheth was put to death and David took the throne over all of Israel.

Before we get into the actual seven-year period of time, there are some things that we need to look at in David's life, his person and his history, and the things that we can learn from it. David is, I know, a very clear type of Christ being a King, a Prophet, and even functioning as a Priest on several occasions. He also serves as a wonderful type for us believers, and there are wonderful lessons that we can learn from David's life, and those lessons are mainly what I want to share.

When I say seven years, you might immediately start thinking about the seven-year period of tribulation, and there is that I want to suggest, but it is problematic. It may be from the Lord, and it may not. That is one thing I keep a light grip on. I do not ever think that is the Lord. I do not trust myself. Too often in my past life I have fooled myself into thinking that the Lord has said something when it was actually something that I might have conjured up in my own mind. So it is a little bit problematic that David would serve as a type of the church in that seven-year period of time. Of course, by that I am suggesting that I do not believe in the pretribulation rapture of all the saints.

I can remember many years ago back in the seventies Hal Lindsey was the propagator of the pretribulation rapture of all the saints. He had it down pat in everything that was going to happen, and then some wise man interviewed him and said, "But what if you are wrong about that and the saints do have to go through some tribulation?" Hal Lindsey got a smile on his face and said, "I have contingency plans." So not even he was fully satisfied that he knew all the truth about it. So I would suggest that the saints may have to go through a period of tribulation, and I think it is wonderful because the Lord prepares His people for those times, and He will not let us flounder and stumble in those times. But even before they begin He begins to train us, prepare our hearts and I am very thankful for that, that the Lord does think so highly of us that He would prepare us for those times.

It is very similar to what Jerry shared on about John the Baptist. John the Baptist is a type of the church in these last days. As I was preparing I did look at Alan Redpath's book on the life of David—The Making of a Man of God." He wrote this in 1962, so just put yourself in his shoes and the situation as it was in 1962. He is writing to the saints, and in the first chapter I just want to read two paragraphs that echoed what the Lord has put on my heart.

"These are the days of an immense significance to the Christian Church. Any of us with discernment cannot but believe the truth of the Word of God that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming back soon to take His people home and thereafter to establish His kingdom. Yet how few of us relate our lives to this significant truth: the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ." That has been on my heart. It is an expectation that wells up within our hearts that is true. Every generation has had that hope, that desire. It does not mean that they were wrong. It just means that that is something that the Lord plants in every generation's heart that the Lord is coming back soon, and the saints prepare themselves for that day. I do not find that Paul was mistaken or that some of the other saints

throughout the generations have believed that the Lord was soon to return.

I remember reading a brochure that a sister used to hand out, "Eighty-eight reasons the Lord is going to return in 1988."

My first days were with Chuck Smith and he was a great proponent of the Lord's soon return in 1977. None of them were wrong; none of us are wrong to have that expectation. The Lord plants it in our hearts, and perhaps this is the generation who will see the return of the Lord in the next few years.

The second emphasis that is from Alan Redpath's book is also what the Lord put on my heart. "The machinery of the church is put to very severe strain, and it is working overtime. But that which the machinery produces so often lacks evidence of heavenly reality. The mass production of modern industry, all kinds of goods which attract the eye but have little lasting quality, is often evident in the Christian Church. In days like these I believe that it is quality and not quantity that is going to count."

If that was a prophetic statement for our day, that is so true, having experienced the last nine years in going to a mega church of want-to-be for five or six of those years. The emphasis on the church at large at least in this country is quantity. I can say that in the time that we were there in Atlanta I heard maybe two messages on the cross. Everything else was about getting saved, going out into the world and sharing the Gospel that more people may get saved. There is nothing wrong with that message, but if that is your only message, then you are missing a vast part of what Christianity is all about. Alan Redpath was saying, and the emphasis that was laid on my heart, is that the Lord is after quality. He does not care about numbers necessarily like men do. Ninety percent of all pastors and the things that they really want are bigger congregations, bigger buildings, a campus, and then you want two campuses, then you want three, then four. You want growth, growth, growth, souls, and of course

sadly to say the money that those souls bring into the church. But that is not what the Lord is after, and what is going to happen in the last days is the quality of the saints is going to matter and not the quantity. And perhaps we will see that in David's life of what that means—quality, a few, not many.

So let's consider David, the man, and we will look at what the Lord says about David. There is a verse in I Samuel 13:14 in which the Lord tells us who David is before he even comes on the scene. This is where Saul is being rejected; the kingdom has been taken away from him because of his disobedience and the hardness of his heart. And God asked Samul to prepare another man, somebody else to take the throne.

Samuel says to Saul, "But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after His own heart, and the Lord has appointed him to be prince over His people because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you."

That is the phrase that always attaches to David. It is a wonderful thing that the Lord saw within David and was able to draw out of him a man after the Lord's heart, after the Lord's purpose. He had one purpose in life, and that was to serve the Lord. But before David sought the Lord's purpose, the Lord first sought David, and He brought David to Himself.

We find that the Lord is still seeking in these days for that quality of believers. I think of the verse in Luke 18 when it says, "When the Son of Man returns to the earth, will He find faith?" I think that is not talking about will he find faith among those people in the world, but will He find faith in His believers in the church? There will be some who are faithful to the Lord to the end, but unfortunately I think there will be many who will be unfaithful to the Lord, and we catch a glimpse of that with what the Lord says in Luke chapter 18. The Lord appointed him, selected him to be a prince among his people, and of course the Lord has His appointments today. We are told in Revelation chapter 5:10 and elsewhere, "And have made us kings and priests to our God, and we shall

reign on earth.” They shall be princes on this earth. So the Lord has appointed and selected a people.

“A man after His own heart.” A key to this is knowing where God’s affections lie. What is God looking for? Of course, we find first and foremost is His dear Son. Everything is wrapped up in His Son. God’s purpose is found in His Son and His reigning and His taking dominion. So closely related to that is His body on this earth in these days is where God’s affections lie, where His work lies, where His desires lie.

And He shall be a prince. When I think of that word prince, I think of Jacob. Jacob means usurper, a stealer, a thief trying to steal the inheritance and the birthright from his brother, rightly or wrongly. He was a conniver, but he was made and called Israel which means prince. The conniver, the usurper became a prince. And so with us Christians who were reprobate sinners, the Lord has taken us, transformed us and made us princes before Him. What a marvelous thing that He has done for us! The Lord who is worthy will have dominion, but we too will also have dominion over God’s creation. It is a marvelous thing that the Lord has destined for those who remain faithful to Him in the days to come.

Paul the apostle echoed these same words, these same thoughts on his first missionary trip. As he came to Antioch of Pisidia, and he entered into the synagogue, they asked him to expound the Scriptures to them. So Paul stood up and ministered the Word to them and he talked to them about their history, how the Lord had preserved them through Egypt and delivered them and brought them into the land. He gave them judges, gave them kings, then he talked about David, and Paul said, “I have found in David, the son of Jesse, a man after my heart.” Can you imagine having that epitaph on your tombstone!? He was a man after God’s heart. She was a woman that was after God’s heart for His sole purpose.

But then Paul adds something to that description, and he says, “Who will do all my will.” David will do all my will. Here we have David, this Old Testament saint, the best that could be expected of the Old Testament

saints, he possessed that desire to do all of God's will, and we will read about where the Spirit came upon him mightily for the rest of his days. However, when you compare it to the gift that has been given to us that the Holy Spirit does not just come upon us but He dwells in us. What a tremendous gift, what a tremendous thing that has been done to us! Far greater than anything David ever possessed or David ever had.

Yet can it be said of us as we look at our lives and examine our lives closely, "I will do all His will?" It puts me to shame that it could be said of David that he would do all of God's will, but can we say the same thing about ourselves with such a far greater possession of the Spirit than David ever experienced? But thank the Lord, at least we can say that we *want* to do all of God's will. There is a desire in our hearts at least to say that even if we don't do all of God's will, we at least want to. The Lord accepts that and will bring us into the good of that in His time.

Now I want to look at David in the sheepfold, and this is before his anointing. We are looking at perhaps as some suggest that David is twenty-five years old when he is finally anointed with the Spirit of God. Many of those are in the sheepfold taking care of Jesse's sheep in the hills above Bethlehem. These, of course, are years of preparation, but they are not lost years, they are years of preparation. And the question I ask and will try to answer, "What was inside David, and this was before his anointing, before the Spirit had come upon him, what caused him to seek and to know the Lord even before his anointing? The first key I think we find uttered in Revelation chapter 5 and Revelation 22. It said of the Lord Jesus that one of the twenty-four elders in Revelation chapter 5 comes to John the apostle and shows him the Son of God like a Lamb. And the Lamb takes up the scroll with the seven seals and was able to open them, and it is told to John by this elder, "Lo, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David has conquered."

In Revelation chapter 22 the ultimate words of the Lord Jesus, the second of the last words that He spoke, He identified Himself as the root

and offspring of David, the bright morning star. David's root before he was anointed and before he became king, was the Lord Jesus Himself, the preincarnate Lord Jesus was his root, was his sustenance, was his very life, and that is why the Lord calls Himself the root of David. The Lord whom David later would recognize when he said, and Jesus quotes him and says, "The Lord said to my Lord." That was his root; the Lord said to my Lord; my Lord was his root; His life sprang out of that.

I remember this silly movie my wife really likes and I kind of like too, "A walk in the clouds." The man falls in love with this young woman whose father runs a vineyard, a very fruitful vineyard, and because of the mistakes of his father the whole vineyard burns down and is destroyed. Everything is gone; everything is burned up. The man runs over and there is a mother plant in which all the other vines have found their life, and he goes over to this plant and finds there is nothing left of the branches. He pulls the root out of the ground and brings it to the father, and the father looks at it and chisels away a little bit and discovers that there is still life in the root. The father was so gleeful because he knew he could start over again because there was life in that root, and they could have a fruitful vineyard again. That is what it means to have that root, and David somehow knew that the Lord was his root. I do not know how but perhaps the other keys that I will share revealed this to his heart.

But it is so true of all of us. We have that root and nothing can harm that root, not even the worst of fires or conflagrations can destroy that root. Our branches might get burned, might get scorched, we might seemed to have lost all of our fruit in a bad way, but there is still life in that root, and we shall rise again because of the life in that root. So let's stay grafted into that.

I always remember what Paul wrote in Romans 10 where he talks about the olive tree and the natural branches and the wild olive branches, we were the wild olive branches producing no fruit at all, perhaps just little bitter fruit, no good for anything in the world and yet

the Lord has taken us and He has grafted us into that natural tree with that root and now we bear fruit because of that. So let us hold on to our root always. Let's never forget it because the enemy will try to dissuade us and get us all track, off base and to forget where our life really lies. It is not in our fruit bearing, it is not in the good works that we do, but it is in the life of the root and not in the branches themselves.

The second key to David in the sheepfold is revealed in three different psalms, and from what I have read and understand are the three earliest Psalms that David wrote, Psalm 39, Psalm 19, and Psalm 8. He wrote these in the first year of his public mission in the public domain. So we find another key to David's life and he spoke of it in Psalm 19:1: "The heavens are telling the glory of God and the firmament proclaims His handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech and night to night declares knowledge. Yet their voice goes out through all the earth and their words the end of the world. In them He has set a tent for the sun which comes forth as a bridegroom leaving his chamber and like a strong man runs his course with joy. Its rising is from the end of the heavens, his circuit to the end of them, and there is nothing hidden from its heat."

In Psalm 8 David says, "Oh Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Thy name in all the earth. Thou whose glory above the heavens is chanted by the mouth of babes and infants. When I look at Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast established. What is man that Thou art mindful of Him and the Son of Man that Thou dost care for Him?"

David meditated. David looked at the heavens and he saw the hand of God in the heavens. He was a man of meditation that thought long and hard about who the Lord is, who the Lord was to his heart. Meditation I think is a lost art to Christians today, and it should not be. David gave himself, took the time and considered these things. Sometimes we think it is wasted time to meditate on the Lord. There are so many things that should be done and can be done for the kingdom of

God. Most often it is things that we want to do in our own lives, but we think of it as wasted time. Why be a dreamer? Why think on things like that when there is so much to be done? Or we think we do not have time to do this. Some of you might say, “You have no idea what my life is like with my job and the responsibilities I have, You do not know what it takes to raise a family, raise kids, put food on the table, you do not know how busy I am with my recreations and the things that I enjoy. I need time for myself. I do not have time to meditate on things, on the universe or on the Lord Himself. Or we think that on top of that I have the church. I have responsibilities for the church. We just do not have time to meditate, but is it really wasted time to meditate on the Lord?

In Psalm 39 David tells us what the end of these things all are. If we really are consumed by this world and things of this world and the things we have to do in this world and the responsibilities we have, we just do not have time to meditate, David says in Psalm 39:6, “Surely man goes about as a shadow; surely for naught are they in turmoil. Man heaps us and knows not who will gather.” All of these things that we do on the earth, all the money we make, all of our toys that we purchase, the homes that we purchase, all the things that we do, who are you going to leave them with? Because that is what is going to end up being. You cannot take it with you. Whatever you are doing on the earth you cannot take it with you. Only the eternal treasures are the things that we can take to a life beyond this one. Should we not then meditate upon the Lord and enrich ourselves in the life of the Lord and what He might speak to us as we meditate upon Him? David was a man who meditated, and it prepared him to be the man who was after God’s own purposes and heart.

The third key we find in Psalm 19:7-11 and it is one of the earliest psalms that David wrote. He says,

“The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple, the precepts of the Lord are right,

rejoicing the heart, the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever. The ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold, sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover by them is Thy servant warned and keeping them is great reward.”

David was a man of the Word. Now I have no idea how that could have taken place. This is before the day of the synagogue and going to the synagogue on Sabbath and hearing the Scriptures expounded to you. How he had access to the scrolls of the Scriptures I have no idea, but somehow through Samuel or through the school of the prophets he became very acquainted with the Word of God, and it was very, very dear to him, and he saw the value of it in his life even before the Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily. So he was a man of the Word. He was a man of meditation.

The fourth key we find that he was a man of prayer. This is one of the emphasis that I really saw in the life of David. In looking at his prayers in the Psalms. I am a person who likes numbers and statistics. My wife accuses me sometimes of being like the movie, “The Beautiful Mind.” John Nash who was trying to connect all the dots in the things that he is reading. That is what she says my notes are like when I am reading the Scriptures. I am trying to connect all the dots and bring them altogether. So I will just name off a couple of statistics here that impressed me.

By title in the Psalms there are 72 Psalms that David wrote. Another source that I read in the Chronological Bible he says there are 96 Psalms that David actually authored, and in those 96 Psalms I counted at least 154 prayers that David uttered. Not all the Psalms are prayers. He has this interesting methodology in which he combines prayers with declaratory statements, and then he might go back to a prayer in the same Psalm and he might go back to another declaratory statement. So

there are many, many prayers, 154 that I counted in those Psalms. I just want to give you an example of what one of the prayers sounds like.

In Psalm 39:12: “O Lord, hear my prayer and give ear to my cry. Hold not thy peace at my tears. For I am a by passing guest, like all my fathers. Look away from me that I may know gladness before I depart and be no more.”

We find these prayers from the very beginning to the very end of his life, he was a man of great prayer. He laid down his heart before the Lord, and he knew what it was to come into the presence of the Lord.

One of the things that I wonder about is how were these Psalms ever recorded? Some are recorded in his first year, more in his second year, more in his third year, on down to the end of his life. Every year there seemed to be some Psalm that David was writing at one time or another. In the cave of Adullam there is a Psalm about that of what he experienced. When did he have time to write that? Was it right at that moment he had a quill and a lambskin and he was writing the things he was experiencing at that time? Or maybe he had a scribe that was with him that as David uttered these things the scribe was right there writing these things. Or better yet what I like to think is that later on in his life as he had time to consider these things he looked back on his life and he remembered the things that he said, the things that he declared to be the truth, and he said, “When that happened in my life this is what my experience was and there was probably a scribe there writing that Psalm out for him. But he remembered these things later in his life. He was a man of great prayer who loved the Lord.

I am very much thankful that there is a fellowship of prayer here much more than I found in any other fellowship that I have ever belonged to, similar to Pointe Valley Fellowship. But people who love to pray and come to prayer and petition before the Lord.

I do have to say about prayer and this is my own experience. I find that prayer is 90 percent perspiration and 10 percent inspiration

meaning by that prayer is struggle. When we come into prayer immediately we do not immediately have the enlightenment of the Lord and we are speaking the words of the Lord. I think that a lot of times we need to struggle like David did. We find him struggling mightily in his prayers about overcoming his enemies and the things that he is facing, he is petitioning the Lord for His health. I think a lot of that is coming out of his flesh. He is a suffering man. A lot of our prayers is we are struggling. We are trying to get into the presence of the Lord ninety percent of the time, but thank the Lord that ten percent is inspiration of the Lord. If you stop and you listen to what other people are praying rather than trying to think of what you want to pray next, but listening to what someone is praying you will catch glimpses of the presence of the Lord and the word of the Lord being spoken to His people, perhaps a prophetic word, perhaps a word of encouragement, perhaps a word of exhortation, a correction, but it is there. And praise the Lord that even 10 percent is the inspiration of the Lord. That means the Lord is really speaking to His people.

Finally about David we have the earliest testimony of what David's character was like. In I Samuel this is just before he is coming to the court of Saul. He has already been anointed with the Spirit and he has gone back to the sheepfold. And it says in I Samuel 16:18 when Saul is having problems with the spirit of evil that has beset him, that there is this young man who speaks up and says, "I know of somebody who can help Saul. Verse 17 of I Samuel 16, "So Saul said to his servants, provide for me a man who can play well and bring him to me." One of the young men answered, "Behold, I have the son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, a man of good presence, and the Lord is with him"

This is the very beginning of David's public exposure, but he is already known to have these characteristics. He is a man skillful in playing, a man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and God is with him. What a testimony from outsiders, somebody who looked on David's life, who

knew David in the sheepfold and what he was like and said, "This man if courageous, there is a courage here. And of course we know the story of David in the sheepfold and the lion and the bear that come and try to take the sheep and what David does with them. And so by my encouraging us in giving us these keys about meditation and prayer and also the man of reading and studying the word, of knowing the word, the value of the word. I am not trying to heap burdens upon people. "Yeah, we need to do all of things to really be a Christian, to really be faithful in the troublous times that we are going to face in the next few years. That is not the point of trying to lay a burden. You really need to be doing this daily in your lives, you need to be praying for an hour, you need to be reading the Word for an hour, you need to be meditating for at least two hours. That is not the point. There are gifts that the Lord gives to His people. To some it may be meditation, to some it may be prayer, to some it may be the Word of God, but to all it is going to be a combination of one degree or another of one of these elements. They need to all be present in our lives but they do not all have to consume our lives in that they become a burden. It is like sometimes we get on these things about reading the Scriptures in one year. Some programs have you reading the entire Bible in three months, and you are just reading, reading to get your days assignment done. What are you really gleaming from that? At the end you have a full view of what the Scriptures say, but of what value is that particular day. We do not do this just as responsibilities or burdens that are upon us, but they should come to us as God's gift to us, as a delight to our hearts that "I can meditate on the Lord. I can just sit here and think on the beauty of who the Lord is, what He has done for me. He is seated in the heavenlies right now with the Father. All of these things that we can meditate on and enjoy and draw fruit from. We can spend out time studying the Word, reading the Word, but take it like you have to spend at least an hour to do that every day. Just open the Word every day and let the Lord speak to your hearts and the more that the Lord speaks to you through His Word, the more that you will want to study,

the more that you will want to read His Word. It is a beautiful thing that the Lord does for us.

Then this whole matter of prayer. We used to have a dear brother who said, "Two things you can bring Christians under most conviction about as you preach are prayer and giving, the areas that we most often neglect in the Christian life. But may it not be but that as we meditate upon the Lord, may we also have a life of prayer, just talking to the Lord, communicating, having an open channel between us and the Lord, and hearing Him speak to us. Not just telling Him. So often my prayers are petitions, asking for this, asking for needs and wants, mostly my need, what I think I need other than what I want. I am telling the Lord all these things as if He didn't know that I needed them or wanted them. But so often it is hearing the Lord speak to us also in our prayers, having Him communicate with us. There is nothing unique about what I am going to share. All of you have experienced it but when you actually hear the Lord's voice and He speaks something to you, either through prayer or through another brother and sister or through a song that you are singing or reading the Word or whatever, when the Lord speaks to us, what a delight! There is no greater delight in all of our lives. You can go out and win a million dollars in the lottery, it is not even comparative to one word spoken to our hearts enlightening us. It is such a delight; there is a God who lives. It is a delight to our hearts to hear the Lord speak.

So I think I will break off what I am going to share here and perhaps the Lord might in future days allow me to share some more and actually get into the first year of David's life and see what the Lord has to say to us about what the church might have to go through but also in those seven years of great illustrations of what our life should be like, and we see David as a type of that and there is great illustrations for us and what he experienced and what we experience as Christians.

Father, we thank You for who You are, that You are a God that loves us with a steadfast love that never ends. You know exactly what we need

for today. You know exactly what we need for the days to come. Lord, if it is true that You will bring us through troublous times even times of tribulation, we need not fear what we will face because You will provide everything for us just as You are today speaking to our hearts, ministering to our needs, helping us in so many different ways. We are just so glad to be Your people to know who You are and how You work in our lives. Lord, thank You for opening up Your Word to us and speaking to us, and even if the brothers and sisters did not get a thing out of this time this morning, You spoke to my heart. You ministered to me and I am just thankful for that. We bless Your name and we worship You today and in the days to come. In Jesus' name. Amen.