

ESF Lord's day service message
7/22/2018

How To Be a Man after God's Own Heart

1 Chronicles 28:9

And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever.

David was a shepherd boy. But God selected him to be the king of the nation Israel. The **reason God** selected him to be a king was not because he was a noble person or a perfect man. In fact, when we see David's life, we can see many flaws and mistakes. He had been in deep sorrow and depression. He committed serious sins and was disciplined by God.

Yet God chose him to be king. God did him a favor. God made his life successful. Why? The Bible says that David was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). Although, he was a sinner, he became a man after God's heart and God made him a man of honor and success.

What was the secret? In today's scripture David revealed the secret to his beloved son Solomon. Here we learn how to be a person after God's own heart and how to live a successful life **with** God's favor even though we are imperfect and sinners.

Acknowledge "the God of your father"

First of all, David encouraged Solomon to acknowledge "the God of your father." What did David mean by **this** word?

1. Know God through an intimate relationship

The original Hebrew word "acknowledge" in this text is "yada." It means to "know" someone through **an** intimate relationship. So it is more than

intellectual knowledge. David told Solomon to know God through having **an** intimate and personal relationship with God. He should not seek God only when he needed help. He must share everything in his heart and in his life with God.

David knew that there were many things his son Solomon should know to be a good king. He should know political skills. He should know how to do **administration**. He should know how to select **the** right people for the right positions. He needed to know how he could build up his leadership.

But David encouraged Solomon to know God above anything else. Because if he knew God intimately, God would give him superior wisdom and knowledge.

David shared everything in his heart with God as he would **share with** a close friend. In 2 Samuel, as soon as David **became king**, he planned to move the ark of the Lord to **Jerusalem** before he did anything else. He wanted to be close to the Ark which represented God's presence. When the ark of the Lord entered the city of David, he was leaping and dancing before the Lord with all his might (2 Samuel 6:14, 16). His joy came from having intimate fellowship with God's presence.

While David knew God intimately, his life was guided by God's favor as the word in 2 Samuel 8:6 states, "*the Lord gave David victory wherever he went.*"

Do you want to be a person after God's own heart? Do you want to live a successful life by God's graceful favor? Share everything in your heart with God through praying and praising.

2. Know God who looks at the heart

David encouraged Solomon to know God who searches every heart and motive behind behaviors. Why is it important to know God who searches

the heart? Because by knowing God who always searches our hearts, we can take care of what really matters to God.

When Samuel came to seek out one of Jesse's several sons on whom God told him to anoint, he was judging them based on their outward appearances. He thought several times, "this son could be the right one." But God said "No" to **him each** time. Then God told him this word: *Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart* (1 Samuel 16:7).

With this word God selected David. He was just an ordinary shepherd boy. God judged him not based on his outward appearance but based on what he had in his heart-his faith in God. That is what God did **for David his** entire life.

One day, David committed adultery with a married woman. And he tried to hide his sin of adultery by killing the woman's husband. Nobody knew of the sin. But God saw the sin hidden in his heart. God revealed the sin through the prophet Nathan.

Also when his kingdom became stronger and **larger**, David counted his people. It seemed that there was nothing wrong with this. But his motive was wrong. Because the reason **he counted** the people was to lift up his name instead of lifting up God. He wanted to boast of being a king with great numbers of people. Again, God revealed that motive and judged him for that hidden sin (1 Chronicle chapter 21).

To be a person after God's **own** heart, you have to know that God searches the motives of your heart. People usually judge you through your outward appearance or behaviors. Today, many people in America spend thousands of dollars on plastic **surgery**, face lifts, or weight loss

programs to enhance their physical shape. They want to be judged well by others according to their outward appearances.

But God judges you by seeing what is in your heart. While you are thinking and doing anything in your life, search the motives in your heart before God. *Why am I thinking this? Why am I doing this? What for? Am I fearing God in thinking and doing such a thing as this?*

If you find that your motive is not right with God, ask God's forgiveness. Change your motive to what God approves. If you are sure that your motive is right with God, maintain that motive even if people disapprove or criticize what you think or do. Then God will honor your motive. God will give you wisdom and favor to accomplish what is in your heart.

Serve God with wholehearted devotion

David encouraged Solomon to serve the Lord with wholehearted devotion. Serving God with wholehearted devotion **means loving** God more than loving **oneself** or loving anyone or anything else. David himself was a man who served the Lord with wholehearted devotion. As soon as David became king, and was settled in his palace, he said to the prophet Nathan; *"Here I am, living in the palace of cedar, while the ark of the Lord remains in a tent."* He thought the ark of the Lord should be in a better place than his palace. He wanted God's name to be honored more than he was honored as a king.

God was pleased with David when he served God with such a wholehearted devotion.

Serving God wholeheartedly also means that we should keep serving God faithfully even if God does not answer our prayers for a long time, or even if we suffer while we serve Him. While David was persecuted by king Saul, he prayed to God for deliverance from Saul. But for many years, God did not deliver him as he prayed. However, David kept serving the

Lord. David kept loving the Lord even if God did not answer his prayer for a long time, and even if God did not deliver him from suffering.

G. Norman Geisler, as a child, went to a Vacation Bible School because he was invited by some neighbor children. He went back to the same church for Sunday School classes for 400 Sundays. Each week he was faithfully picked up by a bus driver. Week after week he attended church, but never made a commitment to Christ. Finally, during his senior year in High School, after being picked up for church over 400 times, he did commit his life to Christ. What if that bus driver had given up on Geisler at **the** 395th Sunday? What if the bus driver had said, "This kid is going nowhere spiritually, why waste any more time on him?" Thank God for faithful servants who are loyal to Christ and their call to service. (Max Lucado, *God Came Near*, Multnomah Press, 1987, p. 133.)

God blesses those who serve Him wholeheartedly. Are you here today to serve the Lord with all your heart? Is God at the center of your heart today? Will you serve God faithfully even if He does not answer your prayer for a long time?

Seek God in all circumstances

David sought God not only when he shepherded sheep in the field, but also when he sat on the king's throne. He sought God not only in good times but also in times of tragedies. He sought God even when he sinned and lost his close relationship with God. And God let David find Him in all those circumstances. David encouraged Solomon to seek God in all circumstances as he did.

God is always near us and is ready to help us with every-day situations.

There was a man who sat on the cliff's edge farther than he'd ever been before. He sat with **his** legs dangling high above the valley's floor and was enjoying **the** beautiful scenery. Suddenly he was pushed by a gust of wind

and he began to fall down the cliff. He was not a man of prayer. But he became desperate and started praying, “God, if you will help me now, I’ll quit my sinful ways; I will do those things you’d have me do and work hard all my days; I will quit the booze and cigarettes and help my loving wife; I will spend time with my children and I’ll turn around my life; I will work to help the needy and I promise to repent.” Just then, a tree limb caught his coat and stopped his fast descent.

God is promising that if we seek Him, He will be found by us.

2 Chronicles 15:2 *...If you seek him, he will be found by you...*

Isaiah 55:6- *Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.*

God wants us to seek him. He wants to be found. It does not mean that we must keep thinking of God. It doesn’t mean that we must constantly search God with enormous effort. It means that we depend on God with a simple faith. It means that we come to God through Jesus whom God has sent to us as the mediator between sinners and the Holy God: *No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son (Jesus), who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.* (John 1:18).

It also means that we can always approach God with faith in His mercy and grace.

Jesus explains well this point with the story of the prodigal son in Luke 15. The son becomes rebellious against his father. He leaves his father and goes on his own way. For a while he enjoys his life. But when he sees how foolish he's been, he decides to return to his father. He thinks that his father will be upset or angry at him. But surprisingly, when the father sees his son at a great distance, he runs out to greet him, embraces him, kisses him, and is overjoyed to have his son home again. A new fellowship is established between them. That is what the father has been waiting for.

This is the image of our heavenly father's love. It is the image of a God who wants to be found and wants to draw near to us. He is the God who is ready to accept us as His beloved children whenever we come to Him with repentant hearts.

Do you think that you are too sinful to receive God's love? Don't follow your thinking. Follow God's mercy. He is ready to forgive you. He is ready to accept you.