

The Weekly Word
June 12-18, 2017

I hope the story of King David is speaking to you. It has been with me. Happy reading...
Grace and Peace, Bill

To hear the Bible read click this link... <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/>.

Monday, June 12: 2Samuel 22- A key to true life...

More than any one specific line of this psalm, it was the entirety that spoke to me in the quiet of my morning. David, king of Israel, in spite of his personal glories and after terrible heartache, takes time to pen praise to his Lord.

What world leader today would take time out of his/her busy schedule to pen a psalm to the Lord? And we know David did this often, given the number of psalms in the Psalter bearing his name.

What Corporate CEO pauses to express her/his delight in the Lord?

David, king of a world power and leader of the military, takes time to let his heart sing to the Lord...

Do I do this? Far too many pastors are so busy that in their press for time they allow their professional sermon or Bible study prep to double as their personal time with the Lord.

David is an excellent example of a man, a busy man, who maintained a life-giving relationship with the Lord through thick and thin. And this, it seems to me, is the key to true life...

Oh, Lord, to sit with You... to speak with You... to be with You is my delight. May this always be so. I pray through Jesus, my Savior. Amen.

Tuesday, June 13: 2Samuel 23- Who surrounds you?...

A few thoughts struck me as I was reading the listing and exploits of David's mighty men.

First, that David had these key men. Many, or at least most, leaders have their key subordinates, people who serve alongside for years, companions who play important roles. Possibly their most important role is that they will do everything they can in order to see the leader succeed. A side kick, a co-laborer, a rear-guard, someone(s) on whom the leader can absolutely depend. Sometimes these others share the limelight and sometimes not. They are not rivals for power or honor; they are trusted people who play unique roles depending upon the particulars of their relationship. David, as warrior king, had 37 he trusted and battled alongside. They were absolutely committed to David's success.

This causes me to wonder if I have certain someones, or if I might be a key man to someone else???

Second, Joab was not listed among the valiant 37. I don't know what that means and I don't want to read too much into this. However, I pondered... though a capable commander, was Joab not trusted by David? Did Joab exhibit some self-honoring traits David didn't want too close?

It caused me to think sometimes a leader has leaders alongside but for some reason they just don't enter that place of inner confidence. Such is life and relationships...

Third, Uriah, the Hitite, was one of the 30. This makes David's sin of adultery with Uriah's wife and murder of Uriah all the more hideous. Uriah had proven to be one of David's most valiant and trusted warriors, still David sinned so greatly against him, even killing him!

This third thought frightens me because it shows me just how wicked the human heart can be. David, a great leader and deeply devoted follower of the Lord, stooped so low during the Uriah/Bathsheba incident. How we humans can justify the worst of sins!! This frightens me because if David could fall this hard, any of us could fall this hard!

Oh, God, keep me close to You. Fence me in from my own possibly of deep, deep sin. Sin is inevitable I know that. I do not say this to give myself an easy way out, but it is reality. But Oh, Lord, keep me from deep, deep sin. Sin like David committed against Uriah... which he committed against You.

*Prune my life to protect and hone me. Fertilize my life with Your Holy Spirit so that it grows strong in YOU!
Oh, Father, I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Wednesday, June 14: 2Samuel 24- Owing my sin...

This is a strange account... with some hard to process thoughts.

I choose to ponder this chapter through the eyes of David. From somewhere deep within, David allows sin to blossom and against all advice he counts his fighting men. After the deed is done –it takes over nine months, inferring that David let the sin fester and linger for a loooong time –he is conscience stricken and begs God for mercy.

This shows me it is never too late to seek the Lord's forgiveness and mercy. As long as we have breath we have an opportunity for mercy. The Lord never closes someone off from His love. But neither will He compel us, but when we turn for home, God comes a running...

The Lord grants David's desire and offers him a choice of punishment. David throws himself directly upon the Lord... a sinner in the hands of a merciful God.

As God's plague approached Jerusalem, the Lord opens David's eyes to see what is happening and the weight of his sin drives him to even deeper confession...

When David saw the angel who was striking down the people, he said to the LORD, "I have sinned; I, the shepherd, have done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done? Let your hand fall on me and my family" (17). Here is a heart truly broken. Here is a man in the hand of the Lord.

I don't know if I have ever seen my sin as clearly as David saw his that day. I don't know if I have ever faced the deep and dire consequences of my sins as David did that day. I don't know if I have ever sinned with such corporate consequence as David did that day. I also wonder if I have ever owned my sin as honestly as David did that day...

Lord, I don't want to face an ordeal like David did. I am not a world leader or a leader of Your people as David was. Nonetheless, I am sorry for my sins and the pain I have cause You and others in my life. Unlike David, I praise You, Jesus, for taking the weight of my sin and guilt on Your back. I am free because You, Jesus, took my place and my guilt and my pain.

Oh, Oh Praise You, Jesus, My savior. Amen.

Thursday, June 15: 1Kings 1- Transfer of power...

My thoughts ranged far and wide from the text today. The text became more of a springboard, rather than a foundation as I sat with the Lord.

My thoughts quickly jumped to the transfer of power. Israel was a mess as David's time was winding down. There was no tradition, no understood way to transfer power from an aging king to his successor.

When there is a vacuum of power, people step in.

Disregarding the king's spoken intention that Bathsheba's son Solomon was to be David's successor-king, Adonijah, the eldest of the king's living sons, stepped in through a conspiracy with key officials to anoint himself king. This traitorous act forces David's hand and Solomon is quickly anointed king and is seated on the king's throne. What a mess...

Where my thoughts and prayers went was to my own country. With all our gifts and faults, one major blessing is the smooth transfer of power. The last 2-3 US Presidential elections has seen our country grow progressively more divided and still the transfer of power has been handled smoothly. For this is am grateful, especially seeing the issues that chaotic power transfers cause, and I am drawn to prayer for my and other countries in the world. When governments are in disarray, it is the people who suffer.

Oh, Lord, thank You for my country and the rule of law so firmly established in it. I am thankful for the founders who established a workable structure and for a country that follows it. I pray for those in national, state and local governmental leadership... give them grace to lead honorably and well. Thank you that power transfer is smooth. It is a great blessing to us as a nation.

Lord, I pray for my world, that leaders everywhere would be honorable men and women who seek wisdom and act with integrity in their leadership. No matter the governmental structure, protect the common person from the ravages of chaotic leadership change. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Friday, June 16: 1Kings 2- Final words...

Not everyone gets to think through their final words, because not everyone knows when their last moment will come. David had a sense so he called his son Solomon in for some final words. His words were my pondering points this morning.

"I am about to go the way of all the earth. So be strong, act like a man, and observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in obedience to him, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and regulations, as written in the Law of Moses. Do this so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go and that the LORD may keep his promise to me: 'If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel' ... (2-4).

David's words continue with some kingly advice about how to solidify Solomon's reign and close out some unfinished business from David's reign. But first and foremost David instructed Solomon in the way of the Lord, one final word to spur his son toward truth and faith.

I love this foundational line: *be strong, act like a man, and observe what the LORD your God requires.*

The calendar tells me that in two days is Father's Day... what a perfect word for fathers and all men... *be strong, act like a man, and observe what the LORD your God requires*

Be strong... God had given us men different bodies than women. Be strong, use what God has given you... your physical, mental and internal fortitude strongly! That is part of what it means to be a man! What do we do with this strength? Observe what the Lord requires! It is not about making wealth or building lands or companies. Oh, that may come and be part of God's plan for you, BUT first and foremost, it is to observe the laws and ways of God! God has given you strength to do just that. Faith is not a sissy matter. It takes strength and fortitude to stand

against the devil and the cries of the human heart to go this way and that, anyway but God's way. Use your strength to say first things first! God comes first... for me and for my family!

This is the strong word of the Lord that is filling my heart this morning...

Oh, God, may I love so... FOR YOU! Amen.

Saturday, June 17: 1Kings 3- What would I ask for?...

What would I ask God for?

Solomon famously answered: *So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?"* (9).

If I were offered the same opportunity as Solomon, I wonder how I would have answered. Without this account to show me a better way, I think I would have asked for money or security or something like that, something that would give me a 'better' life.

Lord, does this show that I am more selfish than Solomon, or is it a reflection of something else? Lord what is it You would want to give me, or desire that I ask for?

This is truly the crux of the devotional matter. What would You hope I would ask for?

Since my life trajectory is not to be king of Israel, maybe Your best for me is not wisdom to discern and the ability to govern. Maybe Your desire for me would be passion for Your Gospel or a deep desire to teach and train Your people. I'm not certain what You would desire for me. But I am certain that that it would involve Your kingdom. Jesus taught: *But seek first his [God's] kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well* (Matthew 6:33).

Lord, I don't have to wait for some dream from You to make this my hope and desire. I can pray for this right now and make it a regular prayer of my heart. Lord, I pray for a deep desire to seek You and Your kingdom first all of my days. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sunday, June 18, 2017, Sunday Worship

If any of my thoughts or the Bible readings spark questions send an email reply and I will do my best to answer all questions from people on the list... I will answer personal questions privately; general questions will be answered in a subsequent email installment.

If you are reading along with me from the PCOG website you can send questions or request being placed on the weekly email list by emailing Lisa at office@pcogonline.org.

Click [here](#) for a link to my sermons on the web. Sermons are generally posted within 2 days.