

David: After God's Heart

God's people will struggle with priorities, but He will help guide us and His people will encourage us.



TRANSFORMATION
for Adult LifeGroups

2 SAMUEL 19:1-15 - RESTORED

JULY 22, 2018/JULY 25, 2018

TODAY'S TEXT

Text: 2 SAMUEL 19:1-15 (NIV), Joab was told, "The king is weeping and mourning for Absalom." 2 And for the whole army the victory that day was turned into mourning, because on that day the troops heard it said, "The king is grieving for his son." 3 The men stole into the city that day as men steal in who are ashamed when they flee from battle. 4 The king covered his face and cried aloud, "O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!" 5 Then Joab went into the house to the king and said, "Today you have humiliated all your men, who have just saved your life and the lives of your sons and daughters and the lives of your wives and concubines. 6 You love those who hate you and hate those who love you. You have made it clear today that the commanders and their men mean nothing to you. I see that you would be pleased if Absalom were alive today and all of us were dead. 7 Now go out and encourage your men. I swear by the Lord that if you don't go out, not a man will be left with you by nightfall. This will be worse for you than all the calamities that have come on you from your youth till now." 8 So the king got up and took his seat in the gateway. When the men were told, "The king is sitting in the gateway," they all came before him. Meanwhile, the Israelites had fled to their homes. 9 Throughout the tribes of Israel, all the people were arguing among themselves, saying, "The king delivered us from the hand of our enemies; he is the one who rescued us from the hand of the Philistines. But now he has fled the country to escape from Absalom; 10 and Absalom, whom we anointed to rule over us, has died in battle. So why do you say nothing about bringing the king back?" 11 King David sent this message to Zadok and Abiathar, the priests: "Ask the elders of Judah, 'Why should you be the last to bring the king back to his palace, since what is being said throughout Israel has reached the king at his quarters? 12 You are my relatives, my own flesh and blood. So why should you be the last to bring back the king?' 13 And say to Amasa, 'Are you not my own flesh and blood? May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if you are not the commander of my army for life in place of Joab.'" 14 He won over the hearts of the men of Judah so that they were all of one mind. They sent word to the king, "Return, you and all your men." 15 Then the king returned and went as far as the Jordan. Now the men of Judah had come to Gilgal to go out and meet the king and bring him across the Jordan.

FIRST THOUGHTS

- What is work/life balance?
- Share a time when you have struggled with maintaining a healthy work/life balance. What factors contributed to it?
- If you were the boss, what would you do to help your employees with work/life balance?

According to business research from Bloomberg and other sources, full-time hourly employees typically work 46 hours/week and salaried employees average 49 hours per week in the U.S.

In this week's lesson, we see David's struggle with his grief over the death of his son and his responsibilities as the leader of Israel. We can very much identify with this human struggle in the life of David. Most of us have faced times where our personal life has affected all the other areas of our lives. How do we handle this? What are our priorities? How do we balance the many expectations placed on us from every side?

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

After evacuating Jerusalem, David gathered his troops and supporters in Mahanaim [may huh NAY im] in Gilead, east of the Jordan River. From that location, he began to organize his army for an attack on Absalom. Though willing to fight with his men, David's followers pleaded with him to not do so but rather provide leadership from the city. The king agreed to their counsel.

David instructed his commanders to preserve Absalom's life. The troops moved to the forest of Ephraim where the terrain was so rugged and precarious that more casualties occurred from the terrain than the actual warfare itself. Absalom himself was entangled in a tree, suspended in midair. News of this was brought to Joab. In spite of the king's instructions, he killed Absalom. As a result, David's grief became almost unrelenting.

The story of Absalom's revolt and death highlight David as a father more than as a king. Leaders are tempted to neglect their families at the expense of their work and service. Any evaluation of David as a father is tinged with elements of subjectivity, but it is obvious that he loved his son Absalom. At the same time, David had to deal with the expectations placed upon him as the king. David faced difficult choices in balancing his feelings and priorities as a father and his responsibilities and priorities as a king.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

MOURNING

> Read 2 Samuel 18:31-19:4

Success in one role doesn't always compensate for loss in another one. As a military leader, David had won a great victory. As a father, he had suffered a terrible loss. As David dropped his head in sorrow, so his men dropped theirs in shame. It was as if they had been defeated in the battle rather than emerging victorious.

- When should the cost of victory outweigh the joy of winning the victory?
- What feelings was David experiencing? What feelings were his men experiencing?
- Is there a “right” way for David to have responded in this situation? What do you think it is?
- In what ways can we stay aware of how our emotions impact the emotions of others? How do we do this without becoming emotionless or neglectful?

CONFRONTATION

> Read 2 Samuel 19:5-8

- What do you think is the tone Joab used here? Why? What did he want David to do? How would you have responded to such a confrontation?
- What can we learn from Joab’s actions in this passage?

Essentially Joab was telling David that his grief was not a luxury the nation could afford at this time. Joab’s contention was that this was the most critical time in the whole rebellion (even in all of David’s reign)—David’s actions at this moment could make or break his kingship.

- Do you believe this was the most critical time or was Joab exaggerating? Why or why not?
- How can we continue to be professional at work or home when personal problems press us? Tell about a time you simultaneously managed your own needs as well as the needs of others.

RESTORATION

> Read 2 Samuel 19:9-15

David’s kingship was restored, but it was not without great personal loss and even more confusion and strife among the people.

Although we don’t know when it was composed, we do know David wrote Psalm 31. It expresses many of the feelings he was experiencing at this point in his life.

> Read Psalm 31:1-16

- Based on this Psalm, how did David handle the conflicting emotions of losing his son and leading his country through a rebellion?
- What can we learn from David’s example in this passage?

SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE

How can we help each other in this crazy race of life? The Bible makes it clear that God is in control even in the midst of our most chaotic times. From today’s story we also see the value of others speaking truth to us (like Joab’s confrontation of David). And the value of listening and responding (David shifted his focus from his own grief to the needs of those around him).

Where are you struggling with competing priorities and expectations in your life?

Who do you know who is in a situation like David of struggle? How can you encourage them in truth and love?

UPCOMING LESSONS

- Read 2 Samuel 20:1-22
- Why do you think David continues to face rebellion and revolt throughout his reign?
- When have you felt overwhelmed by constant opposition? What helped you through that time?

Averted – 2 Samuel 20:1-2, 14-21

Resolved – 2 Samuel 21:1-14

Thankful – 2 Samuel 22:26-36, 50-51

READ THROUGH THE BIBLE

23rd - 2 Kings 20; Isaiah 38, 39; Psalm 75; 1 Peter 2 | 24th - Isaiah 40-42; 1 Peter 3 | 25th - Isaiah 43-45 1 Peter 4 | 26th - Isaiah 46-49; 1 Peter 5 | 27th - Isaiah 50-52; Psalm 92; 2 Peter 1 | 28th - Isaiah 53-56; 2 Peter 2 | 29th - Isaiah 57-59; Psalm 103; 2 Peter 3