

**“Delivered out of One Trial and into Seven More:
A Portrait of a King After God’s Own Heart”
1 Samuel 29-30
January 12, 2020
Faith Presbyterian Church – Evening Service
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We will consider two chapters of First Samuel this evening – chapter twenty-nine and chapter thirty.

David, we need to remember, has been called by God to succeed Saul on the throne of Israel. Though he has been a faithful servant to Saul, Saul has been trying to kill David. Along the way, David went through many trials that tested his willingness to continue to be a faithful servant to Saul, and he has passed those tests again and again. Even so, Saul’s continued pursuit of David has now driven David to dwell among the Philistines. Back in chapter twenty-seven we saw David serving the Philistine Achish and gaining his trust, though Achish thought David was making raids on Israel while David was actually making secret raids on the enemies of God’s people, including the Amalekites.

But now, the Israelites, led by Saul, are preparing for war with the Philistines. And since David and his men are living among the Philistines, and serving under Achish, this puts him in a particularly difficult situation.

Our reading – First Samuel twenty-nine and thirty – is a long one, but please do listen carefully, for this is God’s word for us this evening:

^{29:1} Now the Philistines had gathered all their forces at Aphek. And the Israelites were encamped by the spring that is in Jezreel. ² As the lords of the Philistines were passing on by hundreds and by thousands, and David and his men were passing on in the rear with Achish, ³ the commanders of the Philistines said, “What are these Hebrews doing here?” And Achish said to the commanders of the Philistines, “Is this not David, the servant of Saul, king of Israel, who has been with me now for days and years, and since he deserted to me I have found no fault in him to this day.” ⁴ But the commanders of the Philistines were angry with him. And the commanders of the Philistines said to him, “Send the man back, that he may return to the place to which you have assigned him. He shall not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become an adversary to us. For how could this fellow reconcile himself to his lord? Would it not be with the heads of the men here? ⁵ Is not this David, of whom they sing to one another in dances,

‘Saul has struck down his thousands,
and David his ten thousands?’”

⁶ Then Achish called David and said to him, “As Yahweh lives, you have been honest, and to me it seems right that you should march out and in with me in the campaign. For I have found nothing wrong in you from the day of your coming to me to this day. Nevertheless, the lords do not approve of you. ⁷ So go back now; and go peaceably, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines.” ⁸ And David said to Achish, “But what have I done? What have you found in your servant from the day I entered your service until now, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?” ⁹ And Achish answered David and said, “I know that you are as blameless in my sight as an angel of God. Nevertheless, the commanders of the Philistines have said, ‘He shall not go up with us to the battle.’ ¹⁰ Now then rise early in the morning with the servants of your lord who came with you, and start early in the morning, and depart as soon

as you have light.”¹¹ So David set out with his men early in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines. But the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

^{30:1} Now when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, the Amalekites had made a raid against the Negeb and against Ziklag. They had overcome Ziklag and burned it with fire² and taken captive the women and all who were in it, both small and great. They killed no one, but carried them off and went their way.³ And when David and his men came to the city, they found it burned with fire, and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive.⁴ Then David and the people who were with him raised their voices and wept until they had no more strength to weep.⁵ David's two wives also had been taken captive, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel.⁶ And David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because all the people were bitter in soul, each for his sons and daughters. But David strengthened himself in Yahweh his God.

⁷ And David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech, “Bring me the ephod.” So Abiathar brought the ephod to David.⁸ And David inquired of Yahweh, “Shall I pursue after this band? Shall I overtake them?” He answered him, “Pursue, for you shall surely overtake and shall surely rescue.”⁹ So David set out, and the six hundred men who were with him, and they came to the brook Besor, where those who were left behind stayed.¹⁰ But David pursued, he and four hundred men. Two hundred stayed behind, who were too exhausted to cross the brook Besor.

¹¹ They found an Egyptian in the open country and brought him to David. And they gave him bread and he ate. They gave him water to drink,¹² and they gave him a piece of a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. And when he had eaten, his spirit revived, for he had not eaten bread or drunk water for three days and three nights.¹³ And David said to him, “To whom do you belong? And where are you from?” He said, “I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite, and my master left me behind because I fell sick three days ago.”¹⁴ We had made a raid against the Negeb of the Cherethites and against that which belongs to Judah and against the Negeb of Caleb, and we burned Ziklag with fire.”¹⁵ And David said to him, “Will you take me down to this band?” And he said, “Swear to me by God that you will not kill me or deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will take you down to this band.”

¹⁶ And when he had taken him down, behold, they were spread abroad over all the land, eating and drinking and dancing, because of all the great spoil they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah.¹⁷ And David struck them down from twilight until the evening of the next day, and not a man of them escaped, except four hundred young men, who mounted camels and fled.¹⁸ David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken, and David rescued his two wives.¹⁹ Nothing was missing, whether small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything that had been taken. David brought back all.²⁰ David also captured all the flocks and herds, and the people drove the livestock before him, and said, “This is David's spoil.”

²¹ Then David came to the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to follow David, and who had been left at the brook Besor. And they went out to meet David and to meet the people who were with him. And when David came near to the people he greeted them.²² Then all the wicked and worthless fellows among the men who had gone with David said, “Because they did not go with us, we will not give them any of the spoil that we have recovered, except that each man may lead away his wife and children, and depart.”²³ But David said, “You shall not do so, my brothers, with what Yahweh has given us. He has preserved us and given into our hand the band that came against us.”²⁴ Who would listen to you in this matter? For as his share is who goes down into the battle, so shall his share be who stays by the baggage. They shall share alike.”²⁵ And he made it a statute and a rule for Israel from that day forward to this day.

²⁶ When David came to Ziklag, he sent part of the spoil to his friends, the elders of Judah, saying, “Here is a present for you from the spoil of the enemies of Yahweh.”²⁷ It was for those

in Bethel, in Ramoth of the Negeb, in Jattir,²⁸ in Aroer, in Siphmoth, in Eshtemoa,²⁹ in Racal, in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, in the cities of the Kenites,³⁰ in Hormah, in Bor-ashan, in Athach,³¹ in Hebron, for all the places where David and his men had roamed.

This is the Word of the Lord. (Thanks be to God.)

Let's pray ...

Lord, we know that those who walk in the ways of your word are blessed –
those who keep your testimonies
and seek you with their whole heart.
Lord, make our ways steadfast
in keeping your statutes.
Keep us from dishonoring your name,
by fixing our eyes now on your word.
Teach us the way of righteousness,
so that we might praise you with upright hearts,
Grant this for Jesus's sake. Amen.
[Based on Psalm 119:1-2, 5-7]

When we come to David in our passage tonight, in chapter twenty-nine, he is in a very difficult situation – in an almost impossible situation.

Achish believes that David has deserted Saul and Israel and that he has been making raids on Israel. But in fact, he has not. He has instead been fighting the enemies of Israel. And so, even when living beyond the land of Israel, even when living among the Philistines, David is still at work for the good of the people of Israel and the kingdom of Saul.

But now his situation is coming to a head. Achish has called David to serve with him in battle against the Israelites and Saul. In this, David faces another test. His choices are to either attack Saul and Israel with the Philistines, or to maintain his loyalty to Israel and Saul by acting as a fifth column among the Philistines, turning on the Philistines in the midst of the battle.

It seems to me somewhat obvious that David would choose the second option. We have seen him again and again refuse to stretch out his hand against Saul. And we have been told in chapter twenty-seven that he still continued to protect Israel. It seems somewhat unthinkable that David would attack Saul and Israel now.

Nonetheless, turning on the Philistines in their midst would have been extremely dangerous. David is in a difficult spot.

And then, God, by his providence, delivers him from it.

It is on the ground of the distrust of the other Philistine lords and Achish's somewhat bumbling and mishandled defense of David that David is sent away from the battle. But as we consider the narrative as a whole, it seems clear that the Lord – that Yahweh – has delivered David from this difficult trial.

It would seem at the end of chapter twenty-nine that David can give thanks to the Lord, and breathe a sigh of relief.

But then, as we turn to chapter thirty, we see that the Lord has delivered David *from* one trial, and brought him instead into *seven* new trials.

Chapter twenty-nine presented a serious test for David – a test of his loyalty to Israel and Saul. But we have seen David pass those tests many times already. When Yahweh delivers David from that test, it is a relief, but I think we could have confidence in David doing the right thing.

But we see now that God did not deliver David from that one test to put him in a place of ease. God delivered David from one test to put him to seven tests – seven tests that all surrounded the question of what kind of king David would be.

Tonight, for the rest of our time, I want to walk through those seven kingly tests of David in chapter thirty, to see how David does with each of them, and then to consider what this portrait of David has to say to us.

With that in mind, let's dive into the seven tests or trials that David faced.

The first is the test of how David will respond to devastation and rebellion, in verses one through six.

While David and his men are away, the Amalekites make a raid on Ziklag, the city where David and his men lived, and the Amalekites have burned their homes and carried off their families. And the men are deeply distressed – they wept, we are told in verse four, until they had no more strength to weep. David's wives and children are gone along with everyone else's. And if that were not bad enough, the men, angry and distressed, and wanting to blame someone, begin to discuss stoning David, their leader.

David is faced with devastation and rebellion, and the question is: What will he do?

And even as we ask the question, it is hard not to think of Saul. Because over the previous chapters we have seen Saul, again and again, when faced with opposition or struggles, rely on himself and lash out at any whom he saw as a threat.

David is put into that spot, and we wait to see what he will do.

And in verse six we read “But David strengthened himself in Yahweh his God.”

David turns to the Lord for strength. And in that we see the first snapshot of the kind of king David will be: He will be a king who turns to the Lord for strength when things get difficult.

But then, once he has turned to the Lord for strength, we come to the second test. David has come to the Lord for strength, but now where will he turn for guidance? He needs to know what to do next – whether or not to try to pursue the band that attacked Ziklag. The question is not a strange one, because as we will see, David's forces were much smaller than those they pursued. David needs to know if pursuing them at this time will be successful or will be a suicide mission. Where will David turn for guidance?

And again, we tend to think of Saul – Saul, whom we have seen lean on his own wisdom and understanding again and again – Saul whom we just observed, last Lord’s Day, going to a pagan spiritual medium in order to get guidance, when he gave up on his own wisdom.

Will David follow in Saul’s footsteps?

But then even as we ask the question, we read in verses seven and eight how David turned to the Lord – how he turned to Yahweh – for guidance and direction, calling on Abiathar the priest to consult the Lord with the ephod. And the Lord directed David to pursue the raiders with his relatively modest force of six hundred men. And David obeyed him.

And in that we see the second snapshot of the kind of king David will be: He will be a king who turns to the Lord for guidance, and then obeys the word of the Lord.

David and his men pursue the raiders ... and that quickly brings us to his third trial.

Because in verse ten we learn that two hundred of David’s men – one third of his fighting force – are too exhausted to go on in pursuit of the raiders.

On the one hand, this is not surprising. The men had just made a three-day trek from Achish to Ziklag. Then, after the emotional discovery that their homes were destroyed and their families were gone, they took off on another trek in hot pursuit of the raiders. But by the time they got to the brook Besor, a third of his men were exhausted and could go no further.

The narration moves fast, but it’s worth pausing and reflecting on the fact that this decision at the brook Besor represented another test and another trial for David. It raised the question of how he would respond to the weak among his soldiers.

And once more, the stories we have already heard of Saul come to mind. We remember how back in chapter fourteen of First Samuel, when the army of Israel was fighting the Philistines and the Israelites were hard pressed, Saul’s response was to lay an oath on them and forbid them from eating – “Cursed be the man,” he said, “who eats food until it is evening and I am avenged on my enemies.” [1 Samuel 14:24]. When Saul saw that his soldiers were hard pressed, his response was to lay an even heavier burden on them and urge them to fight *for him*.

David faced a question now: What would *he* do with these men who were exhausted?

And what we learn, almost without a pause, is that David had compassion on his men. David gave them rest. David was kind to the weak among his soldiers. He left them at the brook Besor and charged them to guard the gear.

And then David proceeded in faith ... pursuing the band not with 600 men, but with 400.

And in all this we see the third snapshot of the kind of king David will be: He will be a king who shows compassion to the weak among his people, placing his trust in the Lord.

From the brook, Besor David and his remaining 400 men head out, and in verses eleven through fifteen David comes to his fourth trial.

We have seen how David will respond to the weak among his men. Now we come to the question of how David will respond to the weak outside of his people – including even those who have raised their hand against David.

David and his men, in verses eleven through fifteen, come upon an Egyptian in the open country. This man will turn out to be another providential provision for David – one who will direct him to the raiders. But even as he serves that role, it is key that we note the sequence of events.

Because at first, David and his men don't know that this man will be able to help them like that at all. They find an Egyptian in the open country – a slave whose master simply discarded him in the wilderness, in utter indifference to his life. David and his men find him. David and his men are in a rush. They don't know that this Egyptian has been with the Amalekites – that seems clear because that's the first thing David asks him. On top of that, the man is in too bad a condition to speak when they first come upon him, so he did not provide that information up front.

David and his men come upon this discarded Egyptian slave, and there is no sign that he will be of any strategic value to them. And the temptation surely must have been to just continue on. But they don't. They stop. And they give him bread to eat, and water to drink. Then they give him a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. *Then*, we are told, *after* he had eaten, his spirit revived and he was finally able to talk. And it is then that David asks him who he had been with and where he was from.

From that David learns that the Egyptian was a servant of an Amalekite, who had taken part on the raid on Ziklag, and that he could lead them to the camp of the other raiders. David asks him for help and promises to protect him – apparently allowing him to join David's band.

And in this we get our fourth snapshot of the kind of king David will be: He will be a king who cares for not only his own people, but for those outside of Israel – caring for those discarded by others, and even making a home for those who had previously been enemies of God's people. This is the kind of king David will be.

The Egyptian leads David and his men on, and this brings them to the fifth test. In verse sixteen they come to the Amalekites who had raided their land and who had their wives and children. And the Amalekites are spread abroad over all the land. And they are a much larger force – we read in verse seventeen that while it seems that most of the Amalekites did not escape the battle, an apparent minority of 400 Amalekites did flee on camels.

That means that the apparent minority of Amalekites that fled the battle were the same size as the entire army that David had at his disposal – only 400 men. And so, when David saw the full force, he knew he was wildly outnumbered.

And still, David attacked at twilight.

And why did he attack? He attacked because he trusted in the Lord. David had consulted Yahweh in verse eight, through the priest, using the ephod. And God told David that he would surely rescue the captives from the raiders. So David, placing his faith in the power of God – not

the power of his small force – attacks the Amalekites, trusting God’s promise of victory. And he is victorious.

This gives us the fifth snapshot of the kind of king David will be: He will be a king who trusts in Yahweh – who trusts in the Lord – for victory, rather than trusting in himself.

David is victorious over the Amalekites, but still he is not done. Still two more trials remain.

Because once they have defeated the Amalekites, recovered their families and their goods, and even received other goods and plunder in addition to that, David next faces divisions caused by selfish men in verses twenty-one through twenty-five.

When David and the four hundred make it back to the two hundred, who had been too exhausted and who needed to stay behind with the gear, some men – whom the author refers to as “wicked and worthless fellows among the men who had gone with David” argue that the two hundred men who stayed behind should receive back their families, but should not receive any of the recovered goods.

David could have responded in a number of ways. He could have listened to the wicked men and been harsh with the 200. He could have listened to the 200 and responded harshly to the wicked men.

But he does neither. Instead of responding to the people – to one party or the other – David acted justly, by looking to God’s gracious ways, God’s gracious works, and God’s gracious laws.

First, David remembers God’s gracious ways. In Psalm 103 David himself would write that Yahweh “knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.” [Psalm 103:14] David knew that Yahweh’s way was to be gracious towards the weak. That means first that when he approaches the exhausted men in verse twenty-four, he greets them well. He has no animosity towards them, but like Yahweh, he is gracious where they are weak. It also means second that, though he will rebuke and correct the wicked men, he will not be overly harsh with them either. He will be patient. He will be gracious. David acts justly in line with God’s gracious ways.

And along with that, David acts justly in light of God’s gracious works. David responds to the wicked men by saying in verse twenty-three “You shall not do so, my brothers, with what Yahweh has given us. He has preserved us and given into our hand the band that came against us.” David reminds them and acknowledges himself that it is Yahweh who gave them the goods, who preserved their lives, and who defeated their enemies. And so Yahweh gets to distribute the gifts – not these selfish men. David acts justly in line with God’s gracious works – his gracious gifts.

And finally, David then directs the men to God’s gracious law. In verse twenty-four David points out that those who stay behind are also to receive the plunder along with those who go out, and here he seems to be referring to Numbers 31:25-31. God’s gracious law has already told them what to do in such situations, and David both reminds them, and establishes God’s law as his policy in verse twenty-five.

In all this we see the sixth snapshot of the kind of king David will be: When faced with the weak or the wicked, he will be a king who rules according to God’s gracious ways and Word.

Finally, this brings David to the seventh and final test in verses twenty-six through thirty-one. Because the plunder David recovered included not only their own goods, but also goods that had been taken from the land of Judah, as the Amalekites made raids there. What would David do with those goods?

And here we might remember the warning that Samuel made about what a worldly king would be like. Back in chapter eight the prophet Samuel declared that a worldly king would be a king characterized by taking: He would *take* the peoples sons and daughters to work for him, he would *take* their best fields, he would *take* a tenth of the produce of their land, he would *take* their servants and livestock. Samuel warned them that a worldly king would be characterized by taking.

And now David has in his possession the goods of the people of Judah. In some sense one might say he has a right to it – he, after all recovered it. It is in some sense his now. Would he keep it? Would he begin to use his power to enrich himself above others?

And the answer is no. Instead, he gives. He gives the goods to the people of Judah. Instead of taking, he sends gifts. David here acts as the opposite of the kind of king Samuel warned about.

And so, in this seventh and final snapshot of the kind of king David will be, we see that he will be a king who is characterized by giving rather than taking – by giving gifts rather than exacting personal gain.

In these chapters, God sketches a portrait of the kind of king he desires – a kind of king who is after God’s own heart.

- It’s a king who comes to the Lord for strength.
- It’s a king who turns to the Lord for guidance.
- It’s a king who shows compassion to the weak – both those among his people, and those who had previously been his enemies.
- It’s a king who trusts in God and not himself for victory.
- It’s a king who rules justly, in accordance with God’s gracious ways, works, and word.
- And it’s a king who is characterized by giving rather than taking.

That is the kind of king God desires. And that is what is portrayed in this chapter.

And it is David who puts out that portrait before us – he paints it in his words, in his thoughts, and in his actions.

David gives us that picture here ... but we also know David doesn’t always act as he does here.

David may give us an ideal picture in this chapter ... but in many other chapters David has been or will be a disappointment.

And so, if we stop with David, we have a somewhat disappointing portrait. It is a portrait that maybe the best can live up to at their best moments ... but its fulfillment in the life of David seems fleeting ... it seems momentary.

God gives us here a portrait of his ideal king – of a king after his own heart, and we long to see it fulfilled – we long to see the one who truly lives up to this portrait.

And in that way, the portrait given here points us forward to the one who really *has* fulfilled it. It will not be David. But it will be his son. It will be his descendant, Jesus Christ.

Because in many ways, what we have in these chapters is a portrait of Jesus.

For one thing, we see it in the first point. Just a couple weeks ago we considered God delivering Jesus from the slaughter in Bethlehem. In a similar way God has delivered Jesus from arrest in John chapter seven, where we are in our morning series right now. God delivered Jesus again and again in the Gospels ... but in each case it was so that he might face a harder path – not an easier one. In each case it was to preserve him so that he might go to the cross.

But even more than that, the portrayal of David that follows in chapter thirty points us to the true nature of Christ, and the kind of king he is.

First, it shows us how he relates to God the Father. Because throughout the Gospels, over and over, when Jesus faces troubles, he comes to his heavenly Father for strength, he turns to his heavenly Father for guidance. He walks to the cross trusting not in himself, but in his Father to give him victory – to raise him from the dead.

Jesus relates to his heavenly Father just as we see David relate to the Lord in these chapters.

But along with that, these chapters also show us how Jesus relates to us. Because the fact is that all of us who are Christians have also been each and every one of the problematic people David has to deal with in this chapter.

We Christians have each been the poor and pathetic Egyptian servant – discarded by the world. We were born into a world that was in rebellion against God, and while it may have a place for us, it did not ultimately care for us. And that world, in one way would leave us used up and discarded – abandoned for dead, if it were up to it. But at some point – whether later in life or early in the womb, Jesus found each one of us. He found us when we were helpless. He saved us when we could not save ourselves. And before he required anything of us, he stopped for us, and he gave us bread to eat and living water to drink, and he revived our spirits. Though we had previously been a part of the band that would choose to attack him and wage war against him, he did not strike us. But instead, when we turned from the world we had previously been a part of, he offered us a place among his people. And we became his. Each of us started our Christian life by being the Egyptian.

Each of us also has been the women and children held captive by the Amalekites. We have been overcome and captured by the enemies of our God – unable to free ourselves. But Jesus came for us. Jesus took on our enemies – he went to war with sin, and death, and the devil, and he won the victory and set us free.

Each of us has also been the men who had to stop at the brook of Besor. We have followed our Lord, we have been faithful to him, but we have sometimes been those whose spirit was willing, but flesh was weak. And when that was the case, Christ was not harsh with us. But he

remembered our frame, he remembered that we were but dust, and he was gentle. As Isaiah says, “a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench.”

Each of us has also been like the wicked men who *did* go to battle with the Lord. Though we at times have been weak, at other times we have been stronger – and when we have been strong, we have often looked down our noses at others who were weaker. We have disparaged them. We have demanded that the Lord give us more than he gives them. We’ve been prideful and demanding of our Lord. And when we were, Christ rebuked us while still calling us his brothers – just as David does in verses twenty-three and twenty-four. And he reminded us that all we have is a gift. And he pointed us to God’s gracious justice. And he was gentle even as he corrected us.

Finally, each of us has been like the people of Judah, who received gifts from their king that they had nothing to do with procuring.

In Ephesians four – in verses discussed just this morning by Elder Pfefferle in his Sunday school class – the Apostle Paul writes of Christ’s ascension and its results for us. He writes that “grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore it says, ‘When he ascended on high he led a host of captives and he gave gifts to men.’” [Ephesians 4:7-8]

David, as he prepared to ascend to the throne of Israel, gave gifts to the people of God, and in the same way, Christ, now ascended to the throne of heaven, gives gifts to us his people. He showers blessings on us – both spiritual and relational and material blessings. For Christ, like David here, is truly a king who is characterized by giving rather than taking.

David, was, in many ways, a good and faithful king. But even so, he was only able to give us snapshots – snapshots which we might bring together into a collage or a portrait. Even so, he wasn’t able to truly fulfill the portrait that God puts before us through him.

But Jesus Christ was able to. Jesus Christ has fulfilled it. Jesus Christ continues to fulfill it today.

The first thing our text calls us to is to see the picture it gives us of Christ our king, and to give thanks – to rejoice – and to be encouraged in our faith and our love for Jesus.

The second thing our text calls us to, is, having seen the beauty of holiness in Christ our king, to strive to walk in his ways. That as we see what he has done for us, we strive to live as he did – to imitate him ... or to imitate David as he prophetically imitates Christ.

Seeing David turn to the Lord for strength when he is faced with devastation or uncertainty, we too should seek to do the same when we face hardships or difficult decisions.

Seeing David take risks while trusting the Lord for victory, we too should seek to follow the Lord by faith, knowing that *his* power, not ours, is what brings us success in the spiritual battles of this life.

Seeing how David treats his people, we too should consider how we treat those in our proximity and under our care. We should seek to have the same gentle compassion with the weak among the people of God. We should seek to have the same concern and care for those of the world – even our former enemies – who are battered by the cruelty of their harsh masters, and in need of a new home. We should seek to be patient and gentle in our correction of those among the people

of God who act in selfishness or greed. We should seek to be known by those close to us as people who are characterized by giving rather than taking.

David holds out all this instruction for us – for how we relate to God and how we relate to other people.

So consider David’s instruction. Consider the pattern of life laid out before us. And strive to do the same.

But recognize that as much as you should imitate the king portrayed in these chapters, *you are not the king*. You are not the one who will fulfill the picture before us.

But someone else already has. And so, before you do anything else, gaze at the portrait that is set before us here of a king after God’s own heart, and give thanks that such a king truly exists, and you are his subject.

Set that portrait before you in your heart, that you might behold your king, Jesus Christ, and worship and love him in all you are, and all you do.

Amen.

This sermon draws on material from:

Firth, David G. *1 & 2 Samuel*. Apollos Old Testament Commentary. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009.
Leithart, Peter J. *A Son to Me: An Exposition of 1 & 2 Samuel*. Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 2003.