



"We have met the enemy, and the enemy is us!"

- 1 Samuel 29

by Pastor Tim Dodson
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Sometimes we can take a step back and wonder how in the world we ever got into the places that we have got ourselves into. When things get so crazy that we feel that there is simply no way out. When we realize that we are in our situation for no other reason than our own foolishness, arrogance, and even stupidity.

Saul had dug a hole so deep that there seemed to be no redemption for him. It was a "compound

issue"; meaning, *things kept getting significantly worse with each passing event*, because he repeatedly made wrong decisions, despite supernatural intervention on his behalf. The next thing piled onto the previous thing, and the mountain of crisis and despair grew too insurmountable. He had event after event transpire...each with God Himself stepping up to bail him out, and yet he seemingly was insistent upon that ultimate crash-and-burn finale that was waiting for him. So in the end God allowed it, just as He has and just as He *will* do in the future for many of us.

So here at this juncture, while we *should* be seeing *Saul* have some serious periods of seeking and self analysis, it was actually David, despite some serious mistakes, who would be rescued by God and subsequently change his path! We need to see this aspect of the greater story, or it will be *just a story* for us! It was not that David never made any mistakes...*no, we know the rest of the story and thus know otherwise*, but rather it was because David would seemingly learn from his errors and make changes in his life in order to not fall again in the same manner. It seems God will always remain in the game as long as there remains some fight in us...some passion to learn, grow, and mature into the servant that God brought us into this world to be. This is why, despite all of the David's life long mistakes, scripture still records God referring to in him as "*...a man after my own heart.*"

David made some bad choices. Perhaps they were motivated out of fear, or maybe just out of weariness. But we all know that crisis does nothing for making good decisions! While on the run, David finally ran apparently a little 'too far,' and now found himself living and smooching with 'the other side.' He was "saddled up" with the enemy...the very people that he had once battled against. And if that were not bad enough, such meant that finding himself on the opposite side of that fight... he would now be the very enemy of those he once fought beside!

It seems almost ridiculous...incredulous even, to watch all of these events from afar. The events of the chapters of this book herein is the stuff of movies, especially if the movie is an old 'three stooges' flick! Because apparently truth IS stranger than fiction and the sheer craziness of the circumstances would clearly show that

God was not in this for Saul any longer. We mustn't ever think that the patience of God never runs out. If that were true been there never would have been a flood.

For David, despite the crises, God was still there. So even though David was in a bad way, God would step up to rescue him simply because He loved David, and David loved God. And God will do the same for us, but again there are limits to his patience, and with each passing event, the screws will be tightened a little further in attempt to get our attention. Anyone who has walked with Christ for any amount of time, knows this to be a fact. Not just biblically, but experientially!

Now David was going to find himself looking the wrong way across the line of battle. I have no doubt that such an idea a couple of years prior to this day would have been unthinkable. And yet here he is getting ready to fight alongside the very enemy of his people, to fight against his own flesh and blood. The whole idea of this would seem unbelievable, knowing the heart and passion of David, if so many of us had not experienced it personally ourselves! Certainly I have seen many folks who once fought beside me in the battle for the kingdom, ultimately end up fighting for the other side against the people they once loved...against those they once called brothers and sisters.

No, they did not do so with guns and swords, but they did so with verbal attacks, social media, community innuendos, and back alley shenanigans. I have said repeatedly, that in my heart of humanity it seems a wonder how anyone gets saved today! Because it is often the case, that we do more harm to the kingdom pursuit than we ever do good... even on our best days.

Again, all because of human emotion; *fear, weariness, want and physical need*, David left the land of his own people, and went to reside with the enemy. But I would imagine he never thought he would remain as there as long as he did. Nor did he ever in a million years, think he would actually find himself fighting for the other side. No doubt these are the same thoughts that go on in our own hearts and minds, when we are on that journey ourselves. "*We will not stay long*"... "*we will not make strong connections there*" we tell ourselves. We will simply rest for a while, recoup, and will eventually return back to where we came from. But things do not always play out like we think they will. A specially when we try to usurp God's plan and calling for our lives individually. Because we live in a country where prosperity has allowed for most of the population to have multiple choices in their lives and for their lives, we somehow think that God operates under that same paradigm.

How often we can speak of God's grace without really understanding what that grace actually looks like. We tend to see it as 'God's favor', like the provision of food, vocation or finance. We also see it rather as a sort of 'spiritual elbow room'... a latitude to not be and not do what we are called to be and to do. A liberty to indulge in that which may not be a *sin* but certainly is, *as Paul would say*, a 'weight' that slows us down, and perhaps causes us to stumble or express a poor witness. But God's grace is in fact rather the pouring out of his love in a manner that we do not deserve. A forgiveness we cannot earn ... A relationship that we do not warrant. And frankly, often an intervention by deity Himself. Situations where He catches us when all conventional wisdom would say we're finished or better yet, '*let us fall.*'

This is where David is in this story today. It would be easy to say if he dies then he gets what he deserves. After all what was he thinking by saddling up with the Philistines? Did he forget that he was famous for how many Philistines had killed in the battles of his youth? And yet here he is, doing what he never thought possible, making friends with the enemy and even doing battle for their side.

God would now move in the proverbial "mysterious way," and would rescue David despite himself. The commanders of the Philistines wanted nothing to do with David, and nothing to do with fighting beside him! They saw him as a risk...that even though he was a mercenary he still could betray them and cost them the battle and their lives. Ironically the philistines knew David better than he knew himself! So out of God's grace He would intervene to get David and his men tossed out of the battle before the battle even started.

How often we must admit, that we know our God so little. That we still are so often in the dark as to how our God works and the very length and breadth that He will go to express this thing called 'grace.' God has always had the power to deliver his people. He has done so from the first pages of Genesis to the last pages of Revelation! And he still intervenes for his people today. Even, when we don't deserve it. Even, when we find ourselves in those crazy places where we should never have allowed ourselves to be.

Ironically, David's ego was bruised through this event of God's intervention. But God wasn't interested in David's ego, any more than he's interested in yours and mine. Why do we always think that God is in the business of making us comfortable? God is frankly in the business of bringing us home in one piece to him! I wonder if it ever occur to David, that all of this was the 'hand of intervention' of his God? I wonder if we remember such personal moments such as this for their salvation or rather for the embarrassing aspects of the event? I wonder if we really have any idea how often God it is intervening in our lives for our own safety and for our very good? How often is a mere red traffic light a supernatural intervention by the very hand of a living God? Sadly, we tend to see only the obvious and rarely the subtle. Which means we can miss an awful lot of the miraculous hand of God. The 'thin places' go unnoticed.

I think that it is this seemingly small thing that separates the individual that merely plods along through life, and the one that truly knows a life of worship; natural and organic worship. Only God could have got David out of that situation in one piece! It is ours to see the world and to recognize a situation as the hand of God or merely a fortuitous turn of events. Albert Einstein once said *"There are only two ways to live your life: as though nothing is a miracle, or as though everything is a miracle."* How often we see in hindsight that God was present in a situation and we were blind to His hand of involvement! When that happens I feel like I missed the parade. The party happened without me. How I long to be perceptive of God's presence and moreover his supernatural involvement in my life as well as the world around me. As well as in your lives also!

What is here for us in this passage? What is it that God would have us take home upon the closing of this book today?

Well for one thing, we must never underestimate Satan's tenacity as well as our own wicked hearts to drag us into situations that we would never dream of. I think we generally have no idea what we're capable of doing in times of extreme or situations of great passion. I think it is a dangerous thing to say "I would never do that." For I fear that those are, for many, "famous last words." Why did God rescue David, and ultimately not rescue Saul? Perhaps because despite his shortcomings, David was still listening for the voice of God and still looking for the miraculous in his midst.

Which brings us to perhaps the second lesson to be learned out of this passage; I wonder if we are truly *looking* for the hand of God around us today? I wonder if we are truly *listening* for his still small voice? I wonder if we are still willing to hit the red light instead of the green and know that God is divinely in control of even the smallest aspects of our lives? Do we know that He loves us that much? David had been rescued... even from his own stupidity. And how many of us could testify of the same? Do we know God in this way? Because that is how God wants to know us. For that is love you see...