



**"Doing the Right
Thing for the
Wrong Reasons"**

- 2 Samuel 5-6

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From the time that David had killed Goliath, he essentially led the people even while King Saul was on the throne. Saul had the “badge,” but God was using David mightily; “*Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.*” 1 Sam. 18:7 – When the chips were down, the people looked to David for defense and victory over the Philistines; “*David was prospering in all his ways for the Lord was with him.*” 1 Sam. 18:14. Even while David was in exile, people came to him for justice – (see 1 Sam. 22:1-2) You see, being a leader does not come from having an official title slapped on you, but from faithfully doing the work of the ministry. Being a leader means you actually have people follow you and follow your example. In a one man army, everyone is the general.

No one can “self-anoint” nor can we declare *ourselves* a leader. Those we lead declare it with their lives and experience! David was king by God’s divine direction, but it was the people that saw that he was God’s choice to lead them as a nation – and it was the *people* that declared him their leader. The people gathered together and made a “Covenant Commitment.” We who have made such a commitment to this church understand what that means! “*So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them before the Lord at Hebron...*”

The parallel passage in 1 Chron. 12:23-40 says that this party drew 350,000 total from all of these tribes; There evidently was a huge celebration...a potluck dinner of epic proportions! Was this important? Certainly, no leadership will succeed or survive without consensus and unity. This is why we focus so much on community and fellowship here in this church. What we do, *we do together*. We desire a oneness of mind and heart. A consensus of mission. A unity of passion.

Despite this anointing, we see two David’s throughout scripture. While David was a stellar individual in many respects, we know that throughout his life he made mistakes. And sometimes they were not minor splinters but rather direct disobedience and sometime they were criminal. And yet God still used him. Perhaps that’s because a perfect man does not exist except in the person of Jesus Christ. That is not meant to provide us with a ‘long leash’...but it does tell us that God can and will use us...even in our imperfect form! It’s called grace. And without it, none of us would ever serve Him. According to verse 13, David began to multiple wives and women in his life, despite the express direction by God not to do that in Deut 17:17. However, one thing we see in

David...even while being a lifelong warrior, is a humility before God. He was a “man’s man” but knew who was ultimately in charge! He had the ability to see his error and/or sin and repent. The lack of THAT trait will definitely keep us out of God’s blessing and leadership!

We see that ‘humility in action’ as David approached God for authority and direction when the battle with the Philistines was before him. Despite all of his experience on the battlefield, he still felt he needed God, and indeed he did. He knew God was still the “expert” in all matters, and he did not presume to know what God wanted of Him without seeking God specifically on each matter before him.

The battle with the Philistines was won the first time, and of course it would be quite easy to just attempt to replicate the victory by doing it the same way the second time. But there is a spiritual lesson here that is very important! God sometimes allows us to be tempted to take control of a situation, even when it appears to be exactly the same scenario as before, even where we have had complete victory the first time. Satan loves to use such presumption to cause us to fall. God understands all the nuances of every battle, and will forever desire that you seek Him even if the answer is “obvious” to us!

How often we plow on through an issue without really seeking God on the matter! We make decisions according to our wants, desires, and secondary passions. We make the “obvious” chose instead of necessarily GOD’S choice. It’s easy to think that we know what God would want on a matter! Take this next issue for instance...

In chapter 6, we see a side, or an act of God, which can easily upset us and perhaps make us cry foul! David went out to retrieve the Ark of the Covenant, and bring it home to its rightful place, but this joyful act did not go well. For the Ark is the symbolic place of residence of God. God’s “house,” if you will. God had left some pretty explicit instructions with Israel as to just how to deal with the ark, and how to handle it. An error in that instruction cost this man Uzzah his life. What gets our ire up is that the man was trying to do the right thing...just simply trying to steady the ark and not let it fall. And having reached out to steady the ark, he was struck dead by God for touching it.

In a generation that seems to think that God ‘bends’ for new social and cultural changes, this event can be shocking. But God is quite serious about His directions, and tells us plainly that “He never changes.” Uzzah you see, did the right thing but with the wrong reasons. He thought God needed Him to DO something, when God was and is more concerned with us BEING something. And even though it seemed to be a “no brainer” act on Uzzah’s part, it was not what God wanted and it cost Uzzah his life. Worldly logic does not always reign supreme in spiritual matters. What God told you to do is far more important that what you *want* to do, or what *seems like the right thing to do*...

Lastly we see that...in David’s humility, he eventually brought the ark home to roost, and he did so very very carefully and with great respect. The party still went on, but within the sphere of God’s directions and reference of holiness. Apparently David knew how to worship and he got into it! Remember, our lives and our obedience is the greatest forms of worship we can offer, but how He must rejoice when He sees us rejoice in His presence. Many of us come to times of worship with a lethargic heart and dispassionate mind. That’s sad, and simply reflects our larger relationship with God. It seemed that David’s wife was a bit embarrassed at her husband’s zeal. It seemed that Michal was more concerned about decorum and public opinion than her standing before God. Lots of folks are that way today. They want to tone down their faith so people don’t think they are too radical or overtly zealous. I mean, who wants to be thought of as crazy right? Well, apparently Paul didn’t care, for he said in 2 Corinthians 5:13 *“For if we are out of our mind, it is for God...”*

Michal's slight in this cost her dearly. It broke off her relationship with her husband for one. David chose the way of God over prestige, position, and title. He chose God before even his wife. So much for "family first." He made the "right" choice, though many would have disagreed with him.

In the words of the great warrior Joshua, we read; *"So revere Jehovah and serve him in sincerity and truth. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Worship the Lord alone. But if you are unwilling to obey the Lord, then decide today whom you will obey. Will it be the gods of your ancestors beyond the Euphrates or the gods of the Amorites here in this land? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord."* Joshua 24:14-15 Living Bible (TLB)

Small group questions:

How did each step in David's journey prepare Him for the next one? In what ways does his trials and testing's play into this? How does God use each chapter of our stories to bring us closer to Him?

Why was David chosen King? (Note vs 2 of chapter 5 – *David had proven himself over time. He was no amateur. He was a season warrior, no stranger to testing, and a survivor in times of trial. He was obviously a gifted leader who obviously had the blessing of the Lord on his life and mission.*)

What does the appointment of David to King tell us about how God prepares His leaders? What does it say about the challenges God's leaders will face on their journey toward leadership? If you are in anyway called to lead, in what matters do you need to develop in order to be a strong a righteous leader?

What is the most important characteristic to seek for in choosing a leader? (*Character*)

How did David seek the Lord's guidance when it came to dealing with the Philistines? /NOTE 5:17-25

Why was it important that all 12 tribes followed the same king? (*Unity and commonality, participation in goals and issue that affect them all...common goals...strength in numbers*) Why couldn't every group just choose their own king? What would happen if we all just decided to "fly solo" and "do their own ministry?"

Note: 1 Chronicles 12:39. Why would the 3 days of eating and drinking together be important? (*Again, they would form a unity, a bond as they ate and fellowshiped side-by-side. They would develop early "community." Such unity and community is how God works in the "new covenant."*)

What are your views/thoughts on the episode in Chapter 6:5-11? Was God fair in this matter?

How does careful planning and acquiescing to not just WHAT God wants to do but HOW He wants it done play out here? (note: *compare 1st attempt to bring home the Ark and the 2nd attempt.*)

How do you recognize in your own life what God wants you to do?

Why/how was the house of Obed-edom blessed by the presence of the Ark?

How can we recognize the Lord's presence today? How should that awareness of God's presence affect us? What are ways we worship God?

What lesson if any can we learn from the exchange between David and Michal? (*your faithful life and practice of worship may cost you public standing and personal report with people close to you. Are you willing to remain firm?*)