

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART**1 Samuel 13:14; 16:1-13**

Intro: Several months ago Jeffrey asked if I had ever considered a series on King David? Well no. I haven't. I've considered all kinds of things. I preached messages from David's life and from his songs and his prayers in what we call the Psalms, but never an entire series.

But the idea intrigued me. As I began looking at it and discussing it with Jeffrey and other folks in the congregation, I determined it is a great idea and certainly Spirit led. We can learn a lot from David.

- He was just a regular guy.
- He was a shepherd boy who became a warrior and then a warrior king.
- He was far from perfect – in fact he was extremely flawed.
- But, he was known as a man after God's own heart and we do well to learn from him.

So over the next number of months – we're not really sure how many months, by the way – we are going to examine King David in a series we have entitled, An Ordinary Man, An Extraordinary God, because he was just that, an ordinary man, who served with great devotion, an extraordinary God. Today's message is the first installment in that series, and as we proceed its best to begin with a bit of an introduction as we look at how David was first anointed as king of Israel.

I think every one of us can think of at least one person that we can say was or is a man or a woman after God's own heart. Somebody who's name gets mentioned a lot around ABC was someone who was part of our congregation for almost 25 year -- Luke Keefer, and he fits the description. Somebody else who was part of this congregation, and even though he's been gone from here for almost 45 years at this point, was another BIC church leader named Owen Alderfer. They are the kind of persons who when they pass from our lives, whether it's moving from away or even into eternity, we wonder who could ever replace them? Just recently I was pondering Billy Graham who for close to 60 years preached powerful evangelistic messages and lived a very exemplary and by all appearances, holy, life. Specifically what I was pondering was along the lines of, will there ever be someone who can have that kind of influence and impact again? Billy Graham was a man after God's own heart.

Now, I've only mentioned men here thus far. But there are women after God's own heart as well. Just recently we were having a discussion at a men's breakfast and Toby mentioned Ida Davis and what a blessing she was in his school years as she taught about Jesus. Ida was part of ABC, and she was a woman after God's own heart. So it's not anything that sewed up by men or women, regardless they are people of God who are dedicated to the kingdom. But it's not exclusive. Men and women after God's own heart aren't someone else – they can, AND SHOULD BE, US! You and Me!

Let's look at how David was just such a man, and see how we can apply it to our own lives.

When we first meet David, it's in the passage that Gary read for us earlier in 1st Samuel 16. But the first time he is referred to, not by name, but as a man after God's own heart, is several chapters earlier in 1st Samuel 13. In the early chapters of 1st Samuel the people of Israel are clamoring for a king. They wanted to be like everybody else. "Other countries have Kings, why can't we?" So God relinquished – not because the people wore him down, but because he was using it as a teachable moment. So he had Samuel anoint a tall and handsome young man by the name of Saul.

At the end of this month I'm going to be preaching a message on Saul entitled A TEXTBOOK IMPLOSION where I will outline in more detail his precipitous fall from God's grace and then from power and, finally from sanity itself. The sad thing is, Saul didn't start out so badly. He was a humble man and a hard worker who was serving his father and minding his own business when Samuel anointed him as the first king of Israel. As time went on the power went to his head, and he soon forgot to consider what God was thinking and very quickly proved that he was a man after the heart of people. He may not have had pollsters to tell him what the electorate was thinking before he made his every move, but he probably would have fit pretty well in Washington D.C. Eventually he stepped over the line and went too far and the verdict came from on high, and the message to him through a frustrated Samuel was, *But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you.*" Samuel 13: 14 ESV.

If Samuel was a lesser man he may have been thinking, “See?! I told you so!” He had not wanted to anoint a king, but he followed God’s directed. And once he did, he was Saul’s biggest fan and his advisor and he grew to love the young king. He had had such high hopes for him. But Saul pulled one blunder after another and Samuel’s frustration grew.

Samuel was looking at things through his own human point of view. He was just like us. We live in a frustrating world that makes us scratch our shaking heads and exclaim “You can’t make this stuff up!” and just like Samuel, just when we think that it's too far gone, God asks us what he asked Samuel . . .

Why do you grieve over what I have already cared for?

- I mean, why do we? Why do we act like the solutions to the craziness of society is something we can make happen by electing the right candidate or eating less carbs or by leaving a smaller carbon footprint or reading the next self-help guru or anything this world offers?! The answer is here in the Word of God which says among many other things:

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.*

In all your ways acknowledge him,

and he will make straight your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV

And,

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8 NIV

And,

‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” Matthew 22:37-40 NIV

And that’s just a sampling. We act like we are in charge which was Saul's problem. And he lost his anointing. So, following God’s command, Samuel got ready, gathered his anointing oil and headed for Bethlehem.

- A little aside here. It's interesting, the leaders in the town of Bethlehem are just our own times. When Samuel shows up they wonder what's going on? They asked, “*Do you come peaceably?*” 1 Samuel 16:4. Well, how else would a prophet of the Lord come to town?
 - It reminds me of the time our old Bible Quizzing friend, Arlin Buckwalter, who was an active member of the Mount Pleasant BIC Church, which was just a few miles away, showed up at our Manheim Church on a Sunday morning, and Kathy asked him, “What are you doing here?” And, Arlin, never one to let any opportunity pass, acted insulted and asked, “Is that how you greet everyone here at Manheim?” and for years after, even to the present day if we would run into him, would greet us with, “What are you doing here?”
 - The townspeople are greeting Samuel with a suspicious, “Why are you here?” It's like being called to the principal's office when Samuel shows up. We're not quite sure what we did wrong, but we didn't think we did anything wrong, but WHY IS HE HERE?!!! In Saul’s Israel there was a growing culture of fear and we deal with the same thing. We too live in a culture of fear. Don’t get sucked into it. God is on the throne.
 - But I digress . . .

God was bringing change to Israel

- The man after God's own heart was in the town of Bethlehem and he was one of Jesse's seven sons. So Samuel went to Jesse's home to make an inquiry. Now mind you, God had not sent the prophet to Bethlehem with a name in mind, instead he had told him, . . . *you shall anoint for me him whom I declare to you.* 1 Samuel 16:3b. That’s all. So, from the oldest to the youngest, Jesse’s six sons are presented to Samuel.
- The first one, the oldest, named Eliab, seemed to be the perfect choice right away. But Saul had seemed like the perfect specimen when Samuel had anointed him. We read in 1 Samuel 9 that Saul was, *a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.* 1 Samuel 9:2. But tall, dark, and handsome was not the

qualification God was looking for. Saul was after the heart of the people, and he was a failure, what Samuel was looking for was the one who was after the heart of God.

- You see, even Samuel needed to learn that very often what looks good to us is not what God is looking for. God sees and God knows, and the sons of Jesse lined up in the courtyard were not what God was looking for.
- The one who was out working in the fields was the one who God wanted. Jesse never thought of his youngest and seemingly most insignificant son, but David was the one. Samuel anointed him and the Holy Spirit came on him. The one who is after God's own heart is one on whom the Holy Spirit rests.
- So, let me wrap this up with a short list of some things that describe

A man or woman after God's own heart

- A man or woman after God's own heart honors God. Saul was looking for honor for himself – David sought to honor God. We will definitely see that as the summer progresses. In fact next week will be a perfect example of that as we see David's deep distress as the insults Goliath was heaping on the God of Israel.
- A man or woman after God's own heart knows that God is truly the ruler of their heart. As I pointed out earlier, and as you read through 1 Samuel, which would be a great way to prepare from week to week this month, Saul's power went to his head. He thought he was the supreme ruler and no matter what kind of lip service he paid to God and his prophet, Saul's actions proved who he really thought was the boss.
- A man or woman after God's own heart, has a heart that is repentant. When Saul was confronted with his sin he offered excuses. When David was confronted with his sin, every time he confessed his sin and repented. David wasn't perfect by any stretch of the imagination – after all, he was just an ordinary man. But he knew the power of owning up to sin and turning from it.
- A man or woman after God's own heart loves people and puts them before themselves. Saul was increasingly suspicious and paranoid. We'll see that in a couple weeks when we see how he grew to hate David and even his own son Jonathan. But David loved people and cared for them first – we will see this again and again as the summer progresses.
- A man or woman after God's own heart – SEEKS GOD'S HEART. Alan Redpath wrote this of David's calling "*The public anointing was the outcome of what had taken place in private between David and God long before.*" David and the God of the Universe were not strangers.

Conclusion: All too often we think it is someone else who is a man or woman after God's own heart. But, and this is something that should have been reinforced over the past month as we've looked at the work of the Holy Spirit in the people of God, we too are people after God's own heart. When Samuel poured oil on David's head

... the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward. 1 Samuel 16:13. If it can happen to a boy named David it can happen to any one of us. We shouldn't be surprised at what God can do in the life of a willing servant. David Guzik made me smile when I read this: *Samuel took one look at David and reacted exactly the way God wanted him to: "LORD, I don't know why You chose this kid. But You will have to put him on the throne. I can't do it."* And that's exactly right. God WILL have to do it. For any one of us, as his chosen, we can't do it, but as God works, we can be men or women after God's own heart. Amen.

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