

What does it mean when the Bible says.....

- That David was a man after God's own heart?
- Didn't he commit adultery and murder?
- How can that be "after God's own heart?"
- In today's lesson, we'll take an in-depth look at that statement and be challenged on how our hearts can be ones that please God as we look at.....

David, great goodness and great sins, yet a man "after God's own heart"

- This phrase is part of a sermon of Paul's in the NT Acts 13:22—where he is talking about the history of Israel, and Paul says, "After removing Saul, he made David their king. God testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'"
- It's a goal I think we'd like to have said of us all.
- In this lesson, we will look at what does it mean, to be a man after God's own heart? Then we'll review how David lived it out and finally how we can make it true in our lives.
- First look at the definition of: Greek: Heart/*kardia*
- It's the same word used to describe the heart as the organ in the body, but obviously it means more.

Expanded meaning of "kardia"

- **Blue Letter Bible defines the Greek word:**
- **Kardia [in addition to the organ that pumps blood is] the center and seat of spiritual life.**
- **[Also thought of as] the soul or mind, ...the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes, endeavors...of the will and character.**
- In **Hebrew it is the word *lēbāb***, n.m. & f. [251] [v [4213](#); [10381](#)]. heart; by extension: the inner person, self, the seat of thought and emotion: conscience, courage, mind, understanding:—
- Let's look at the word in other places of scripture, for an expanded understanding of it.

Other uses of "Heart" in the Bible

- Mat 6:21 KJV *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*
- **Our heart reflects what is important to us.**
- **To be after God's own heart, we should attempt to make important to us the same things that are important to God.**
- A diagnostic verse: Matthew 12:34 *Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.*
- **And what's inside will come out—our actions and words will show if our heart is based on God's will and ways or our own.**

Popular culture has diminished the definition of the heart

- We've made it mushy emotion—but again, it's so much more than that.
- **Jas 5:8, Amp** You too, be patient; strengthen your hearts [keep them energized and firmly committed to God], because the coming of the Lord is near.
- Not just having positive feelings about your faith, but "Energized and firmly

committed to God.”

- Living with the reality that Jesus can arrive at any time, either His return or Him calling you home.
- ***If that is the primary direction of your heart, your heart can be a heart after God’s own heart—it will not mean you are perfect, but that you respond correctly when you make mistakes—this is important because.....***

We seldom make straight line progress to becoming all God wants us to be

- In the past I used a squiggly line and the straight line to illustrate the overall sovereignty of God in contrast with our human will?
- ***The point is that God has a plan for us that will be ultimately fulfilled, but we seldom get to it in a straight line.***
- ***And yet, the vitally important thing to remember is that no matter what the twists and turns of life, successes or sins is that somehow, somewhere in your heart of hearts that you decide that following Jesus and becoming what He wants you to be, to do HIS WILL is the most important thing inside you.***
- A good verse to pray as we begin this exploration of what it means to be a person after God’s own heart, is to pray as David did,
- *Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting. Ps. 139: 23,24*

With that as an introduction, let’s learn from David’s life

- It is important to understand that striving to be a person after God’s heart does not mean a life without problems or sin.
- David had plenty of them.
- But notice ***how he reacts to them*** in contrast with Saul, who when he made a mistake, made excuses, and dug himself deeper into whatever sin he committed.
- In contrast, here is a good description of David’s life, Prov. 24: 16: ***Though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again.*** (not an excuse to diminish the pain or seriousness of “falling”)
- Let’s now look at the falling and rising in David’s life to learn from the positive and avoid the negative.

David as a young man

- Anointed to be king when he was approximately 15-16 years old, but tough times will be ahead.
- ***Initial application: Encourage young people and us all to dream big dreams for God, while at the same time helping them see the training, denial, and discipline they will need to make their calling reality.***
- Don’t give anyone the false idea that Christianity is all fun, good times, and a protection against everything that is difficult.
- IF you do that, what happens (and this applies at any stage of life), if you think the Christian life is a guarantee against troubles, when troubles come.....
- You will bail out, get angry with God, complain, whine and walk away.
- In reality, the greater the calling, most likely the more challenges the person will have as they persist to fulfill it.

We all need to see trials as training to help us grow in Christ-likeness

- *James 1:2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*
- **Perseverance is key.**
- Anyone can have a passion, a heart for God for a short time—but lifelong perseverance, perseverance when all is going badly or sadly, that is the important thing.
- Let's look (REALLY look at attitudes, responses) at the life David led that developed his life-long heart, his perseverance for God.

During the probably 15 years until he became king

- After fighting a lion and a bear, he fought Goliath and won— and yet **he never refers to it again or mentions it in any Psalms—always a focus on the strength of God—credit to where credit is due always in his life.**
- Becomes popular in Saul's court, marries his daughter, leads armies.
- Saul turns on him and he is a fugitive.
- For **many years (10-15)**, he is on the run, in miserable circumstances.
- His wife was given to someone else. He loses best friend (Johnathan).
- Saul whined, disobeyed, acted presumptively, when he experienced trials.
- David **did not complain, acted kindly to others, and never once tried revenge on his own; he turned his trials into a legacy of trust and praise to God and wrote many Psalms during this time.**

Here is a representative one of them, and there are many—be inspired to write your own in difficult times

- Psalm 37 Living Bible (TLB)
- **37 Never envy the wicked! ²Soon they fade away like grass and disappear. ³Trust in the Lord instead. Be kind and good to others; then you will live safely here in the land and prosper, feeding in safety.**
- **⁴Be delighted with the Lord. Then he will give you all your heart's desires. ⁵Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him to help you do it, and he will. ⁶Your innocence will be clear to everyone. He will vindicate you with the blazing light of justice shining down as from the noonday sun.**
- **⁷Rest in the Lord; wait patiently for him to act. Don't be envious of evil men who prosper.**
- **⁸Stop your anger! Turn off your wrath. Don't fret and worry—it only leads to harm. ⁹For the wicked shall be destroyed, but those who trust the Lord shall be given every blessing. ¹⁰Only a little while and the wicked shall disappear. You will look for them in vain. ¹¹But all who humble themselves before the Lord shall be given every blessing and shall have wonderful peace.**

More about how he refused to take matters into his own handsNEVER ours to do!**

- He did not kill Saul, though he had many opportunities to do so.
- **IMPORTANT: he knew God's overall commands—that he was not to harm the king anointed by the Lord.**
- When Saul was in a cave and unprotected, or asleep in the camp, he could have easily killed him.
- He didn't let an earthly event, **a seeming coincidence guide him**, though the stakes were huge.
- The kingship and a kingdom as well as the lives of all who followed him were

on the line.

- Yet, he held firm in obeying God.

Important application

- Be careful of making a wrong decision because some random event happened, “a sign” or whatever that is contrary to either previous guidance, a clear command from God, or the clear teaching from the Bible.
- No matter if it is a challenging provocation or positive event, **there is never a circumstance that should cause you to disobey what you know God wants you to do, about clear guidance in His Word.**
- **Nobody “makes” you do anything. Circumstances don’t force you to take shortcuts. You lose your temper, cheat, take a moral shortcut, react badly BECAUSE YOU CHOOSE TO.**
- Even advice by otherwise good people, who care about you, may need to be ignored.
- David and all his troops could have easily rationalized that God had given Saul into their hands and so it must be OK to kill him.

But it wasn’t

- These situations are tests—does David truly love and trust God as he says he does?
- Does David obey God, no matter if it goes against everything He wants, **even what God has anointed him to do?**
- Does he trust God no matter how long it takes for God to fulfill His promise?
- Or how much it costs? And does he do it without whining, complaining, or blaming others? (as Saul did)
- **And does that love translate into obedience even when it is not in his best interest?**
- God allows tests like this to see what is truly in our hearts—primarily to SHOW us—God knows already.

Results of his obedience through these challenges

- Matured him to become the greatest king in Israel’s history.
- Many challenges, battles during this time where he needed to listen to God.
- Also, many Psalms were written during this time (**remember the context of them as you read**) that would bless humanity throughout human history.
- If David had not trusted God; he and all of us after him would have lost out.
- **Application:** Don’t rush through the difficult situation God is using to train you, don’t disobey a clear command or calling, no matter what—**especially if it’s something that appears good, that is what you want, but that you KNOW isn’t God’s will—WAIT for God to work.**
- **TRUST GOD’S TIMING above all else.**

David finally becomes King of all Israel

- Continues to fight battle after battle, solidifying the boundaries of the land.
- For the first time Israel now occupies the land that was given to them after the Exodus.
- David conquers Jerusalem, makes it his capitol.
- Decides to bring the Ark to Jerusalem (it had not been in the Tabernacle since the Philistines captured it).

But he did it the wrong way

- He put the ark on a cart and when Uzzah (son of the man who owned the cart) reached out his hand to steady it; he was struck dead.

- David was angry, left the ark for three months and finally moved it properly as was prescribed in the law, on the shoulders of priests and all went well.
- Initially, David demonstrated pride and self-will—
- **Application: *We must be so careful, just because God gives us success in one area, we can never think we are above the law or God's clear commands to us in an area that is not ours to make decisions in.***

Then, David then wants to build a temple

- Nathan the prophet first tells him, "Go ahead and do it, the Lord is with you."
- Nothing wrong with that desire; much good about it from a human viewpoint.
- But that was not God's plan **for him**, and Nathan goes back and tells him that David cannot build the Temple, however, his son will.
- And God will give him an everlasting heritage.
- **David's response: *Acceptance and praise.***
- He gets back to doing what he was called to do—to conquer and to fight battles.

Application: what do we do when God says "no" to what seems to be good things?

- ***Be thankful and focus on what we are called to do.***
- If we can—do all we can to help support others in their calling—even if it is something we wish we could do.
- Encourage, equip, pray for them.
- That is what David did—his actions are written about in much more detail in Chronicles, more a little later on that.
- But after that, instead of fighting & leading the army, which is what he was supposed to do, he stayed home....

That was a mistake

- 2 Samuel 11: *It happened in the spring of the year, at the time **when kings go out to battle**, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. **But David remained at Jerusalem.***
- He wasn't out doing what he was called to do, which was to be the military leader—to FIGHT.
- And what follows is his adultery with Bathsheba, murder of her husband, death of his child.

Aside from, of course to not commit adultery and murder, our application—

- ***You are NEVER released from God's calling on your life in things large or small until the Lord calls you home.***
- ***It's seldom ok to shift from being obedient in ministry, to saying, "I've put in my time" and totally dropping out of serving.***
- That doesn't mean we must keep doing all the things we did at another time in our lives in the same ways.
- It does mean we are never free from the obligations of discipleship and can now simply focus on yourself.

We may shift in how we express our calling

- For me, I know I was called to be a writer and teacher for Jesus and for years I expressed that by traveling all over North America, running through airports, and standing all day to teach seminars.

- I can't practice my calling in the same way today.
- Varies challenges, I ended up in a wheelchair, then after surgeries and extensive physical therapy walking for any distance and standing still present challenges—though I can walk!
- And I can sit really well. My calling hasn't changed, but how I practice it has. I can do writing and teaching online through what I'm doing now, podcasts, videos, blogs. And I sit down to teach live.
- I am incredibly thankful for the internet and all that it enables me to do to continue my calling to be a writer and teacher for Jesus. And for comfy stools and people who help set up my classes.
- ***Application especially as we get older or other challenges come into our lives: shift, modify, train and pass on. HOW you fulfill your calling may change but don't even consider quitting or get to work if you have been sitting on the sidelines because of some excuse.***

We also never have a reason to cease practicing Biblical virtues

- We know the commands—
- *In everything give thanks, 1 Thes. 5:18*
- *Do everything without griping and complaining, Phil. 2:14*
- *Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly, Micah 5:8*
- And hundreds of other similar ones on Christian character.
- Youth, middle age, and old age, sickness, financial needs, interpersonal issues, all have their challenges and possible excuses to act badly, but we are the eternal disciples of the living God and nothing in our age or current life challenges gives us an excuse for bad behavior to not be pleasing to Him.

David knew that. Even in his sin—he did not cease being a man after God's heart

As He records in ***Psalms 51*** "Written after Nathan the prophet had come to inform David of God's judgment against him because of his adultery with Bathsheba, and his murder of Uriah, her husband."

- *O loving and kind God, have mercy. Have pity upon me and take away the awful stain of my transgressions. ² Oh, wash me, cleanse me from this guilt. Let me be pure again. ³ For I admit my shameful deed—it haunts me day and night. ⁴ It is against you and you alone I sinned and did this terrible thing. You saw it all, and your sentence against me is just. ⁵ . . . ¹⁰ Create in me a new, clean heart, O God, filled with clean thoughts and right desires. ¹¹ Don't toss me aside, banished forever from your presence. Don't take your Holy Spirit from me. ¹² Restore to me again the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you. . . .*
- ***¹⁶ You don't want penance; if you did, how gladly I would do it! You aren't interested in offerings burned before you on the altar. ¹⁷ It is a broken spirit you want—remorse and penitence. A broken and a contrite heart, O God, you will not ignore.***

Application: even in sin, we can still be a person after God's heart

- Again, a great contrast with Saul, who when Samuel confronted him,
- Saul defended himself, rationalized his sin, wouldn't repent.
- When Nathan confronted David, as Ps. 51, he deeply and sincerely repented.
- Confessing our sins means we agree with God that we sinned as 1 John 1:9

reminds us, *If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

- **BUT as important as confession is we must also accept and live as forgiven people.**

David did not let his sin define his life

- As David said:
- *Ps³ If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
O Lord, who could stand?
⁴ But with you there is forgiveness. . . .
that you may be feared.*
- ⁵ *For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is plentiful redemption.*
- ⁸ *And he will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.*

- **Forgiven and redeemed, he continued to serve God.**
- **He knew service what not about his worthiness, but a gift from God.**
- **Don't let past sins keep you from serving God, no matter what.**

David's sin with Bathsheba had serious consequences

- His first son with Bathsheba died. Eventually another son is killed by Absalom, who revolts and is also eventually killed.
- ***Yet, this sin was not the final event of David's life. In fact, in the Chronicles it isn't even mentioned.***
- Much happened after that, he sins in other ways, his repentance continued, but David arguably did his greatest work later in life, more on that in a minute.
- He lived after the sin with Bathsheba approximately 20 years from Solomon's birth until Solomon becomes king and during that time...

He made preparations for the temple—some of his greatest and most lasting work

- He provided resources in gold, silver, iron, wood, stone to build it.
- He provided the people trained to do the work.
- He organized all the workers, Levites, all involved in Temple work into groups and schedules to do the work.
- He created detailed job descriptions for all involved.
- People seldom see this events in their proper place because they read Chronicles with Samuel and Kings, when it is best read as the LAST of the Old Testament, a summary of all that came before.

A summary of this work in Chronicles

- *1 Chron 28: 11-19 Then David presented his son Solomon with the plans for The Temple complex: porch, storerooms, meeting rooms, and the place for atoning sacrifice.*
- *He turned over the plans for everything that God's Spirit had brought to his mind: the design of the courtyards, the arrangements of rooms, and the closets for storing all the holy things.*
- *He gave him his plan for organizing the Levites and priests in their work of leading and ordering worship in the house of God, and for caring for the liturgical furnishings.*
- *He provided exact specifications for how much gold and silver was needed for each article used in the services of worship: the gold and silver*

Lampstands and lamps, the gold tables for consecrated bread, the silver tables, the gold forks, the bowls and the jars, and the Incense Altar.

- *And he gave him the plan for sculpting the cherubs with their wings outstretched over the Chest of the Covenant of God—the cherubim throne. “Here are the blueprints for the whole project as God gave me to understand it,” David said.*
- ***As Moses was given instructions for the Tabernacle, David was given the plans for this Temple.***

He also left us his Psalms that continues to bless us today

- David also went back to a love of his youth—Music.
- We assume that prior to this time, the Psalms were primarily in oral form.
- Later in life, when organizing the music for the Temple, he edited and organized them along with the specific instructions we see in the headers of Psalms as to how they were to be performed.
- *Next David and the worship leaders selected some from the family of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun for special service in preaching and music. 1 Chron 25:1, MSG*
- From his prayers from years of walking with God, his journals, his song, his private devotions, whatever form they were in, he was now able to leave a legacy to others.

The pattern of David’s life

- After great sins, heart-felt repentance, then accepting God’s forgiveness, and then RENEWED SERVICE.
- After he fell down, he always got back up.
- Remember, no matter how great your sin—and David committed many—the same God who loved and forgave him, loves and forgives you—accept it and rejoice in it!
- ***Do that and You too can be a person after God’s own heart!***
- One more verse that always encourages me.

A wonderful encouragement

- ***The way of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, which shines ever brighter until the full light of day.***
Prov. 4:18, NLT
- Back to the squiggly....
- Our days are bound to be full of them, but don’t let the squiggles discourage you....
- As we go through life, our squiggles, the twist and turns, will even out and our lives will more and more line up with the line of God’s perfect plan, until the day that we leave the squiggles behind, and the straight path is the only road we travel with our Lord forever.

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