

“David’s Righteousness Displayed”  
1 Samuel 23:6-14  
(Preached at Trinity, November 19, 2017)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. David is one of the most unique characters in all of Scripture.
  - A. We read of him first in **Chapter 13:14** - "The LORD has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has appointed him as ruler over His people"
  - B. It was to David that God promised an everlasting kingdom  
**2 Samuel 7:16 NAU** - "your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever."  
This Davidic Covenant was fulfilled through the Lord Jesus Christ.  
The Prophet Daniel spoke of the everlasting Kingdom of Christ  
**Daniel 7:14 NAU** - "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed."
2. David was a man described as mightily filled with the Holy Spirit.  
**1 Samuel 16:13 NAU** - "Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward."
  - A. David was a man of faith. As he wrote many of the Psalms his great trust in God was continually expressed.
  - B. But David was also a human being like us all. He had the same struggles with sin that we all do. But there are few in Scripture who knew God like David.
3. As we continue making our way through the chapters that describe the life and reign of David we find far more than just a historic narrative. We find before us continual displays of the character of David, both his strengths and weaknesses. These displays provide us with wonderful examples that we can use in our own journey of faith.  
We find his name in **Hebrews 11** as one of the great heroes of faith that stand as our examples.  
**Hebrews 11:32-34 NAU** - "And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, <sup>33</sup> who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed *acts of righteousness*, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight."  
**Hebrews 12:1 NAU** - "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us"

4. David's life, like all of us, was a rollercoaster. At times his faith was mighty, and other times it was weak. In **Chapter 21** he is in despair and acts foolishly before Ahimelech the priest and Achish the Philistine king. Then his faith is revived and he once again demonstrates great courage and strength. By the time we get to **Chapter 27** we'll find David, once again, at a low point.
  5. Here in **Chapter 23**, however, we find multiple examples of David's righteousness. The chapter opens with David going to war with the Philistines in order to deliver the city of Keilah.  
It displays David's character that distinguished him from Saul. While Saul was self-serving without regard for the people, David possessed a heart of loyalty for God's people.
  6. Saul soon discovered that David had taken up refuge within Keilah's walls and prepares to lay siege. David is once again in a dangerous position. He enquired of God and learned that Keilah would betray him to Saul. One would expect unfailing gratitude and loyalty from Keilah. David had delivered them from their enemy. Instead, they were more than willing to give David over to Saul – **Verses 10-12**
  7. How devastating this must have been to David and his followers. They had risked their lives to come to the aid of the Keilites. Having defeated the Philistines, David and his men had moved into the city and entrusted their lives to their care. Now David learns that in order to protect their own lives they will hand David and his men over to Saul
  8. In the next few verses we'll see more evidence of David's righteous character. I title this sermon, "David's Righteousness Displayed." In these nine verses we'll see David's righteous character displayed in three ways.
- I. David sought God's guidance – **9-12** – David was a man of prayer
- A. David's first response was seeking the face of God  
"O LORD God of Israel"
    1. David didn't look beyond God. He wrote in **Psalms 20**  
**Psalms 20:7** – "Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God."
    2. Presumably, Abiathar was in possession of the Urim and Thummim. These were early instruments for acquiring a word from God.
    3. The point is, David's first impulse was to hear from God
    4. David was seeking more than just a knowledge of the future. It reflected his dependence upon God and trust in God.  
**Psalms 54:2-4 NAU** - "Hear my prayer, O God; Give ear to the words of my mouth. <sup>3</sup> For strangers have risen against me And violent men have sought my life; They have not set God before them. Selah. <sup>4</sup> Behold, God is my helper; The Lord is the sustainer of my soul."
    5. What a contrast between righteous David who sought God's guidance and wicked Saul who bumbled along on the impulses of his own wisdom and whatever intel he might receive from other men.
  - B. A man's righteousness is displayed by how he seeks God in all things. God is at the center of his life. Seeking God is as natural as breathing.
    1. Micah wrote: **Micah 7:7 KJV** - "Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me."

2. David declares in **Psalm 40**  
**Psalm 40:1-4 NAU** - "I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me and heard my cry. <sup>2</sup> He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, And He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm. <sup>3</sup> He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; Many will see and fear And will trust in the LORD. <sup>4</sup> How blessed is the man who has made the LORD his trust"  
**Psalm 121:1-8 NAU** - "I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; From where shall my help come? <sup>2</sup> My help *comes* from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth. <sup>3</sup> He will not allow your foot to slip; He who keeps you will not slumber. <sup>4</sup> Behold, He who keeps Israel Will neither slumber nor sleep. <sup>5</sup> The LORD is your keeper; The LORD is your shade on your right hand. <sup>6</sup> The sun will not smite you by day, Nor the moon by night. <sup>7</sup> The LORD will protect you from all evil; He will keep your soul. <sup>8</sup> The LORD will guard your going out and your coming in From this time forth and forever."
3. This must be our testimony as well. God has continually proved Himself faithful in your life. Look to Him.  
**Deuteronomy 7:9 NAU** - "Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments"
4. God hears and responds when we come to Him for direction. We may not have Abiathar the priest and his ephod, but we have a greater Priest.  
**Hebrews 4:14-16 NAU** - "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are, yet* without sin. <sup>16</sup> Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

- II. David was a man of grace – How did he react to word about Keilah’s lack of loyalty?
  - A. David had an expectation of loyalty from the people of Keilah
    1. It was at great risk that he came to their defense. He was willing to sacrifice his safety for them. Did he not have a right to expect loyalty from them?
    2. He provided safety for them. David served as their deliverer.  
**1 Samuel 23:5** - "Thus David delivered the inhabitants of Keilah."
    3. Didn’t David have a right to expect gratitude from Keilah? Wasn’t it just for Keilah to provide safety and refuge for David and his men?  
 The word from God must have been devastating  
**1 Samuel 23:12 NAU** - "Will the men of Keilah surrender me and my men into the hand of Saul?" And the LORD said, "They will surrender you."
    4. David felt abandoned and betrayed. He had rescued Keilah and they returned treachery.

- B. It would have been easy for David to have been angry, hurt, bitter, vindictive
1. Vengeance would have been the natural response but instead David's response was grace.
  2. There were no harsh words, no retribution  
**Psalm 31:13-15 NAU** - "For I have heard the slander of many, Terror is on every side; While they took counsel together against me, They schemed to take away my life. <sup>14</sup> But as for me, I trust in You, O LORD, I say, "You are my God." <sup>15</sup> My times are in Your hand; Deliver me from the hand of my enemies and from those who persecute me."
  - Psalm 31:23-24 NAU** - "O love the LORD, all you His godly ones! The LORD preserves the faithful And fully recompenses the proud doer. <sup>24</sup> Be strong and let your heart take courage, All you who hope in the LORD."
  3. We might compare David's response to Keilah's *actual* disloyalty to Saul's treatment of Nob's *suspected* disloyalty.
    - a. David's decision was based upon the true testimony of God  
Saul's decision was based upon the false testimony of wicked Doeg
    - b. Saul responded by having every living thing in Nob destroyed.  
How did David respond? The text tells us he and his men simply departed.  
**1 Samuel 23:13 NAU** - "Then David and his men, about six hundred, arose and departed from Keilah"
  4. David was in no way perfect as we will often see. There were times when David could be vicious and ruthless. We'll see in **Chapter 25** he was not nearly as patient with Nabal.  
While a righteous man will still at times respond improperly, the over-all direction of his life will be graciousness.

### III. David put his life in God's hands

- A. They went "wherever they could go" – **Verse 13**
1. They left Keilah without knowing where they would go. The text implies they went from place to place under God's direction.
  2. Day after day God protected them  
**1 Samuel 23:14 NAU** - "And Saul sought him every day, but God did not deliver him into his hand."  
**Psalm 54:1-4 NAU** - "A Maskil of David, when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, "Is not David hiding himself among us?" Save me, O God, by Your name, And vindicate me by Your power. <sup>2</sup> Hear my prayer, O God; Give ear to the words of my mouth. <sup>3</sup> For strangers have risen against me And violent men have sought my life; They have not set God before them. Selah. <sup>4</sup> Behold, God is my helper; The Lord is the sustainer of my soul."

3. The natural tendency when we are wronged is to seek vengeance. The Biblical model is clear. We must trust our lives into the hand of God leaving any vengeance to Him. We'll see more on the subject of vengeance in **Chapter 25**  
**Romans 12:19-20** – “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. <sup>20</sup> Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.”
- B. David looked to God to vindicate him -
- Psalm 54:1 NAU** - "A Maskil of David, when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, "Is not David hiding himself among us?" Save me, O God, by Your name, And vindicate me by Your power."
1. David was pleading for God's justice. He sought God in going to war against the Philistines to rescue the citizens of Keilah and they turned on him. He was also just in seeking protection from the Ziphites in **Verses 19-23** and they turned on him.
  2. David's cause was just. But notice his chief concern was the glory of God. We are sinful to focus only upon ourselves. Vindicate ME because they have offended ME. They have not ultimately sinned against us but against God.  
**Psalm 54:3** – “For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul: they have not set God before them.”
  3. We can also hear the voice of our Savior as He was falsely accused and condemned - **John 15:25** – “They hated me without a cause.”  
 Our Lord serves as continued encouragement for us:
  4. David is asking God to come to his aid and bring justice. We are not allowed to execute justice ourselves. God's justice is perfect and often swift. Even when we do not see God's justice coming swiftly we patiently wait upon Him to vindicate us and Himself.

#### Conclusion:

1. It is important to pause here and remember that David was but a man. We've seen David's life of righteousness. But David was in no way perfect. What we are going to see of David in the future are many displays of unrighteousness. But David's life was a consistent display of righteousness. This must also be the display of our life.
2. May God continue to give us wisdom and instruction as we follow the life of David. May his sins serve to warn us. Even righteous men are in danger. But may his righteousness serve to encourage us. The testimony of David's life is that he was righteous. God's continued testimony to future kings would be:  
**1 Kings 11:38 NAU** - "If you listen to all that I command you and walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight by observing My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then I will be with you and build you an enduring house as I built for David"
3. May the example in these brief verses of **Chapter 23** stand as our example. David was a man who sought God's guidance. He was a gracious man. He was a man who trusted his life into the hand of God.