

(1 Samuel) Bottomed Out and Starting to Rise

by David Guzik

David's spiritual decline is a cautionary tale of the importance of staying vigilant in one's walk with the Lord and recognizing one's true identity in God.

Duration: 36:13

Scripture: 1 Samuel 30:6, Psalm 27:14, Proverbs 14:12, Jeremiah 6:16, Lamentations 3:22-23, Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:28

Topics: "Spiritual Decline", "Godly Restoration"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the story of David and his men returning to their city, Ziklag, only to find it burned and their families taken captive. The speaker emphasizes the importance of recognizing and acknowledging our own spiritual decline and the consequences that come with ignoring warning signs from God. David and his men cried and mourned over their loss, realizing that it was their own fault. The speaker suggests that David could have found strength in the Lord by remembering God's love and seeking His guidance in restoring what was lost.

Transcript

1 Samuel chapter 29. We've been following the life of David in 1 Samuel. And when we last left David in 1 Samuel chapter 27, David was in a time of spiritual decline in his life.

David's life before the Lord knew some amazing heights. He had really walked closely and with a strong relationship of faith and trust in the Lord. But sometimes, I mean, to go and face a giant armed with a sling and stones, you're trusting God.

But there were other times in David's life where he didn't have the same kind of faith. There were times in David's life where he was in a time of spiritual decline. And if I could be very straightforward with you, 1 Samuel chapter 29 is about as bad as it gets in the life of David.

He's going to bottom out in this chapter. But we're also going to see him begin to come up. We're going to see something glorious that the Lord can do in David's life and in our lives when we're in the same kind of situation.

1 Samuel chapter 29, verse 1. Then the Philistines gathered together all their armies at Aphek, and the Israelites encamped by a fountain which is in Jezreel. And the lords of the Philistines passed in review by hundreds and by thousands. But David and his men passed in review at the rear with Achish.

Now, you get the picture here, don't you? You've got the Philistine army is preparing to fight the Israelite army. And their staging ground, their assembling area for the armies is in a place called Aphek. And as they're there gathering together, you know the Philistine army from this city and from that city and the other city, they're all meeting together at Aphek to coordinate their efforts and then to go on from there to the place where the battle's going to be.

And as they're all gathered together at this time, at this place, who was there among them? David and his 600 men who were his followers. Now, you almost want to scratch your head and say, what's going on here? David, a man of God, a man who was anointed and called to be the next king of Israel, is going to join his small army with the Philistine army and fight against the people of God. Do we remember what nationality Goliath was from? He was a Philistine.

When David went out and fought battles, when he was a general in Saul's army, he went out and he fought the Philistines. Now he's going to fight with the Philistines against the people of God. As a matter of fact, look how certain David's friend among the Philistines, a man named Achish, is of all this.

Verse 3, Then the princes of the Philistines said, What are these Hebrews doing here? And Achish said to the princes of the Philistines, Is this not David, the servant of Saul, king of Israel, who has been with me these days or these years? And to this day I've found no fault in him since he defected to me. Well, Achish says, Yeah, he's one of us. He's going to fight with us.

And here's David preparing to do something. I want you to think about this, that it shows us how deep David's decline was, doesn't it? I mean, he didn't start out here. He's been living among the Philistines for more than a year at this time.

But here he is among the Philistines, living with them, and he's become so much like the Philistines, so, if you will, worldly, that now he's going to fight with the Philistines against the Israelites. One thing that I think is remarkable about this, I think that it's remarkable to see that David is in a place now that he never thought he would be in. I mean, if you were to talk to David five, ten years before that, let's say David just coming from the field of battle with Goliath, and you go to David and you interview him and you say, David, you know what? Fifteen years from now you're going to be fighting with the Philistines against the people of God.

And David would say, you're nuts. That's not me. Never me.

No, not me. Somebody else might do that, but not me. That sounds like Saul.

That doesn't sound like me. David would say, I would never, ever do that. I think there's two things we need to gather from that.

The fact that this man after God's own heart finds himself in a place where he never thought he would be. First of all, it says something to us right now, doesn't it? Let's say right now you're walking well with the Lord and things are great and you're loving God. Well, God's good and you're just loving Him.

Praise the Lord. Friends, do you realize that you've got to stay on guard and stay vigilant in your walk before the Lord? Because maybe you could be one of these people who five or ten years from now you'd find yourself in a place that you never thought you'd be in right now. That place that you think of right now, oh no, not me Lord, not me, not me.

You'll find yourself there in five or ten years if you don't give careful diligence to your walk with the Lord. You'll say, oh no, not me, that's not me. You're more of a man after God's own heart than David was? If it could happen to David, I think it could happen to any one of us, couldn't it? The second thing I think we need to take a look at in regard to that is that maybe this morning some of you find yourself in that place that you never thought you would be.

Five, ten years ago, you used to look at the people who were at where you're at right now and you used to shake your heads at them. Oh, isn't that terrible? You used to condemn that sin in other people. And maybe from the outside, everything looks fine.

I mean, after all, here you are at church, right? But maybe on the inside, maybe in the secret place, there's sin and corruption that nobody knows about and you're in a place that you never thought you would be in, but here you are. God's Word has something to say to you. God's Word has something to say to that person who finds himself in a place of sin that they never thought they would be in.

Can I share one area that has just come to my attention, almost in a barrage in recent weeks? It's this whole issue of men finding themselves in a place they never thought they would be in regard to pornography on the Internet. They find themselves sucked into this trap where they find that they're compelled or addicted or just whatever to go and to visit those places on the Internet they have no business visiting. Now, you know, I believe that the Internet is a marvelous thing.

I use it all the time. I think it's a great tool for doing a lot of wonderful things. There's a lot of great things you can have out there on the Internet.

My friends, for some people it is such a trap and it's such a snare that it's wrecking lives and ruining homes. I get an anonymous letter across my desk a couple weeks ago from a woman in our own church family. And she says, you don't know who I am and I'm not going to tell you who I am or my husband is, but my husband is into this pornography thing on the Internet all the time.

And he knows I know, but he doesn't care a thing about that. He just keeps on going with it. Now, I bet if you were to talk to that man and see the hurt in his heart, he'd say, I never thought I would be here.

But there he is nonetheless. Friends, the power of Jesus Christ can set him free. But there has to be a change of mind, a change of heart in regard to that.

Can I say something that I think is something very practical and pointed that everybody should do? I think everybody in our church has access to the Internet in their home or at their office should do this. You should put some kind of security or filtering software on your computer. You know the things that you dial into to access the Internet? They call them an Internet service provider.

You can get Internet service providers that filter it for you. And you don't have to worry about it. You can't even go to those places because they filter it for you and those are excellent things for you to use.

Or another thing you can use is install software on your computer that filters it for you. And you can't even go to those sites that you shouldn't go to anyway. I'll be very straight with you.

That's what I have on my computer both at home and at the office. I have this software called SurfWatch. Some people have looked at it and they thought that it's like the surf report.

No, it's not that. I have other stuff on the computer that does that. But this is a program that filters out and just makes it unable to access stuff on the Internet that you just shouldn't be accessing.

You know, I thank God that I have that stuff. Why should I subject myself to needless temptation? Why should I even bother? I don't even have to think about it now. It's just not even an issue.

And what freedom there is in that? Of just not even having an issue in your life. And some people say, well, you know, I don't want that because maybe there's something legitimate that I'd like to go after and then I can't get it because it'll block me. You know, that happened to me this week.

It did. I wanted to buy a CD, a music CD. I heard this great old country group from the 30s and the 40s.

Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys. I said, oh man, that's good music. I said, that's good.

And so I buy stuff on the Internet. And so I'm there and I'm going to this site where you can buy CDs. And oh yeah, great, they have it, you know.

And so I go to the page where you can go and order it and then it comes up on the screen, Access Denied by Surfwatch. I'm saying, I just want to buy a CD. And then I thought of the name of the group.

Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys. And it filters it because of the name. And I said, well, I guess I can't buy it from them.

And so it was a real big trial for me to have to go down to the music store and just buy it there and so on. You know, I know it was hard, but it's just part of the price I'll pay for following Jesus. Well, of course, I'm kidding, right? It's no inconvenience at all, right? It's entirely worth it.

When you just meet the people and see the destruction that it caused, the problems that can come from people being in a place where they never thought they would be, you just say, man, do something about it. Well, that's the kind of place David was in there. And you know, other people could see it, but David couldn't.

Look at it there in verse 3. Notice what the princes of the Philistines said. It says, then the princes of the Philistines said, what are these Hebrews doing here? David looked different. Here's the Philistine army from Ashdod.

Here's the Philistine army from Gaza. Here's the Philistine army from this place. Well, here's David and his men.

They don't belong here. They're Hebrews. And the princes say, what are these Hebrews doing here? Would to God that David would have asked that question.

Would to God that David would have said, I don't belong here. I have nothing to do with this. But he didn't.

It's strange how the Philistines were aware of this, but David was blind to it. They could see what was right even when David couldn't. And they knew who David really was.

They knew David was a child of God. We don't worship the same gods. We don't follow the same things.

What's David doing here? What are his men doing here? David should have been reminded of who he really was. That he's supposed to live at a higher place than battling with the Philistines among the people

of God, making his home among the Philistines. David, lift yourself up to knowing who you really are.

But David's mind wasn't there at all. David should have remembered who he really was. The Philistines knew it, but David wasn't.

How great it would have been if somebody could have come along and said, David, realize who you are and live up to that level. But David wasn't there. Instead, in verse 3, we have the sorry spectacle of David's friend Achish trying to defend him.

He's trying to say, well, he can really fight among us, but it doesn't really achieve very much. Look at verse 4. It says, but the princes of the Philistines were angry with him. So the princes of the Philistines said to him, make this fellow return, that he may go back to the place which you have appointed for him, and do not let him go down with us to battle.

Lest in the battle he become our adversary, for with what could he reconcile himself to his master if not with the heads of these men? Is this not David, of whom they sang to one another and danced and sang, Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands? Why, we know he doesn't belong to us. He might turn and battle, and what's more, this is the same David that killed Goliath, and they sang that song about him. And they sang that song, and David says, oh, there's that song again.

Seems to haunt David all along, but that song was a song of celebration after David had killed Goliath. And doesn't that seem to be a million years ago? When David walked in this faith and trust and devotion to God, it all seems to be a distant memory. Other people remembered it, but David really didn't.

And so they rejected. David says, well, no, we're not going to be allowed to fight with these folks. And if you notice here in verse 6, Achish speaks to David and says, Then Achish called David and said to him, Surely as the Lord lives, you've been upright, and you're going out and you're coming in with me and the army is good in my sight.

For to this day I have not found evil in you since the day of your coming to me. Nevertheless, the lords do not favor you. Therefore return now and go in peace, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines.

David, they won't let you fight with us. Go home. You don't want to displease the lords of the Philistines.

Well, isn't that startling? What would you think of David? Turn the clock back. Here he is. He's about ready to go fight Goliath.

He's getting ready. He's got the sling. He's got the stones.

He's got all those things. Well, David, I don't think you should do that. I don't think you should fight Goliath.

Because if you hurt him, you'll displease the lords of the Philistines. What would David say to you? He'd say, Displease the lords of the Philistines? I want to displease the lords of the Philistines. I want to do everything I can.

I think about ways to displease the lords of the Philistines. If I ever stop displeasing them, you tell me. But now David is concerned about displeasing the lords of the Philistines when he has no business being concerned about that.

These are ungodly people. These are people that David should not have a concern that way about at all. So David had to deal with this.

But now he's concerned about this when he shouldn't be. As a matter of fact, look at the appeal he makes in verse 8. David said to Achish, But what have I done? And to this day, what have you found in your servant as long as I've been with you that I may not go out and fight against the enemies of my lord, my king? Or excuse me, my lord the king. David here is protesting and almost begging to be allowed to do this.

Oh no, you see the situation here in verse 9. But Achish answered and said to David, I know that you are as good in my sight as an angel of God. Nevertheless, the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle. Now, therefore, rise early in the morning with your master's servants who have come up with you.

And as soon as you are up early in the morning and have light, depart. Sorry, David, it's not going to work. Go home.

How do you think it felt in David's heart to hear that? He probably didn't like it. He felt rejected. You know, it can be painful to be rejected by the world.

You know, the world looks at you and says, and they'll never say it in these words, right? But the thought is there, the feeling is there. And they'll say, you're a Christian. You're not one of us.

You don't belong with us. See you later. If you've ever had that happen in your life, you know it's painful.

You also know that it's one of the best things that could ever happen to you. Matter of fact, a lot of times when you have that kind of association with the ungodly, God will allow that to happen. Because you wouldn't cut it off, so God will make them cut it off from their end.

And it hurts. Like, oh, they're not my friends anymore. They don't love me.

They don't care about me. You know what? It's of God. It's one of the best things He can do.

I remember when this happened in my life, when I was in high school. And I had given my life to the Lord, and I was trying to follow after Jesus Christ. But honestly, I was living a life of a lot of compromise.

Because I wanted to please my ungodly friends. And the peer pressure was just incredible. I just wanted to be liked by my ungodly friends.

And I suppose that when you're a teenager, you feel that more than you ever do. We all deal with it our whole lives, but especially when you're a teenager. And God had to deal with my heart and just persuade me that it was okay to let those friendships go.

And you know what? Some of them I let go. Some I didn't have to, because they let me go. It was the best thing that could have happened to me.

Because my life with the Lord just flowered. And you know what? Some of those people came to the Lord. And became my friends in the Lord.

And isn't that a glorious thing? Friends, sometimes the best thing that can happen to you is to be rejected by the world. I know it hurts. I know it smarts.

David was hurting right here. But you and I, from a distant perspective, can look at it and say, this is a good thing happening in David's life. He's getting sent home.

And so there it happens. Verse 11, so David and his men rose early to depart in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

So the Philistines go out and get ready to fight Saul and the armies of Israel. David goes back home to the south to his own city of Ziklag. And notice, pick it up here in verse 1 of chapter 30.

Now it happened when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day that the Amalekites had invaded the south in Ziklag, attacked Ziklag, and burned it with fire, and had taken captive the women and those who were there. From small to great, they did not kill anyone, but carried them away and went their way. Isn't that amazing? Here's David.

He and his army are making the march from Aphek to Ziklag in three days. It's about 75 miles, so they did about 25 miles a day. How would you feel after hiking with all your army gear 25 miles a day for three days? You're worn out.

You're tired. You're exhausted. You just got slapped in the face up at Aphek.

So you're discouraged, and you make your way down. You walk down, but you keep feeling, you know, I've just been rejected. I'm tired.

I'm hungry. But at least I'm coming home. I'm going to get to see my wife.

I'm going to get to see the children. I'm going to get to sleep in my own bed. I'm going to get to be around my own things.

We're coming home. And so as they're a few miles away from the city of Ziklag, David and his men, their spirits pick up. Yeah, it's been a bad month or so, but you know, we're coming home.

Isn't that great? And they're almost home, and there they are. They're almost there. And it's funny.

Nobody has come out from the city to greet them. Nobody. Now, that's unusual.

Now, usually some of the little kids in the village would be out. They'd see the army from afar, and they'd come out. Daddy! Daddy! Nobody's coming to greet them.

What? Don't they want us to come home? As they look over the city from the distance, they see smoke coming up from the city. And it's not the smoke from cooking fires. That looks different.

This is too black. This is too different. Something's wrong here.

And they pick up their pace, and they want to get to the city a little quicker. And when they get into the walls of the city, they see that it's a burned-out ghost town. You know how it is.

You start panicking. Your heart beats harder, and you look around everywhere. And you look in every nook and every cranny.

You search every room, because maybe your child was left behind when all the others were taken, but it's not the case. Maybe your wife was left behind, but no, no, everything's gone. Everybody, everything, everything you've worked for, everyone you've loved, it's gone.

So what do you do? You probably do what they did in verse 4. And David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept until they had no more power. They cried and they cried. Six hundred hardened, fighting men of war cried like babies.

You know, they had good reason to cry, because they had been living in a place of spiritual decline for a good long time, and now it's all caught up with them. They didn't listen to the Lord when He gave the warning signs along the way. They ran through the warning signs, and so now you know what the Lord did, and now the Lord barricaded the road.

No more warning signs. There's a barrier in the road, and you can't get around this one. You can't ignore the burned-out city.

You can't ignore the family and the things that are gone. It's all gone. So they cried.

They cried because they knew it was their fault. They cried because they didn't know how they were going to get it back. They cried because they were in that place where everything that they ever had was knocked away from them.

And David, too. Look at what it says in verse 5. And David's two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite, had been taken captive. It touched David's life, too.

Everything he'd ever known, every support, every pillar that he leaned on in his life, was taken away. You know, I've got my friends the Philistines. No, they just rejected you.

Well, I've got my family. No, they're gone. Well, I've got my kids.

I can raise up something for them. No, they're gone. Well, I've got my possessions, right? No, I've got that.

No, while the whole army was away up at Aphex, the Amalekites came in and took everything. Everything you trusted in before. Everything you had security in.

It's all gone. It's been taken away in a moment. Well, no, you say, no, that's not true.

Because David had his 600 men. You know, at a time like this, then it's your friends around you, right? They rally behind you and you, well, let's support each other and buck each other up. Come on, you know, we can do it, right? Look at verse 6. Then David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters.

Well, that one's gone too, isn't it? Nothing, nothing. Everything is gone. David feels like every single support that he can lean on in his life is shattered.

The only thing he can do is trust in the Lord. That's it. Just the God who created heaven and earth, the God who spoke the universe into existence, the God who manages the slightest detail of our life for good, for his glory, the God who saved him and loved him, it's the only thing he can trust in.

It's come to that. You know, my friends, you ever been in that place where all you have is the Lord? Even your friends forsake you? That's it. That's all you got is the Lord.

And nobody wants to be in that place. If you were to say to me this morning, I want to be in that place where everything is stripped away, and all I have is the Lord, well then, either you don't understand what I'm saying, or come on up for prayer after service, you need to work on that lying problem you have. Friends, nobody wants to be in that place, but you have to say, it's a good place, isn't it? God's going to do something very good in David's life through this.

Everything's gone, all he can do is trust in the Lord. Can I tell you, God's going to come through for David. Look at the very last line of verse 6, and we'll conclude with this this morning.

It says, But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God. In the middle of verse 6, David hits rock bottom. Doesn't go any lower than that.

Doesn't go any lower than having everything else gone, and then you go to your buddies, your friends, and say, oh guys, isn't this terrible? And they say, yeah, it's terrible, we're going to make it terrible for you. And they start picking up rocks and looking at David funny. Doesn't get any lower than that.

That's rock bottom. Now David starts making it up, and we'll follow next week on how he continues to go up, but I just want you to look at the turning point here at the end of verse 6. But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God. Just think of that sentence.

First of all, it says, but David. Who was it who did it? It was David. And what David was this? Was this the sweet psalmist of Israel out there in the shepherd's fields singing beautiful psalms, oh Lord, I love you, I trust you, I praise you.

You know, we think of that David. Yeah, David strengthened himself in the Lord. No, it wasn't that David.

You know what? This was the carnal David. The backslidden David. The David who wasn't thinking clearly.

That was this David. That David strengthened himself in the Lord. Now can you strengthen yourself in the Lord? You bet you can.

You know, some people think, well, you know, I can't have any strength in the Lord because I'm kind of on probation from God. You know, I've come back to him, but you know, he puts me in the doghouse for a couple of months, a couple of years, and you know, after I'm off probation, then God will start blessing me. In fact, there is no probation with God.

None. Your sins have been dealt with at the cross by Jesus Christ. Period.

There's no probation. That's double jeopardy. That's making you pay for your sins twice.

It doesn't matter if you're just as bad off as David was or worse. You can strengthen yourself in the Lord your God. Next, at the end of verse 6 it says, David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.

He received strength and he felt it flow through himself and he was bold enough to ask for it from God and to receive it from God. You know, I think that before this, David didn't see himself as weak. When he's before the Philistines, wanting to fight with their army, he thought himself as strong.

Yeah, I'll be a great asset to your army, Mr. Philistine. I'm strong. But now David has all the pretense of strength stripped away.

You come home to a burned out ghost town and it's different, isn't it? You don't think you're strong anymore. Then you cry out to the Lord for strength you don't have. That's where David is now.

He needs the Lord's strength. You notice also in verse 6 it says, David strengthened himself in the Lord his God. Friends, there's wonderful times where the Lord brings people into our lives to strengthen us in the Lord, right? Isn't that something we should seek to do for one another? What a great ministry you can have, strengthening someone else in the Lord.

But I will tell you, there will be times in your life where God will not permit someone else to do it. And don't blame those other people. God will hold them back for his own purposes to where you have to strengthen yourself in the Lord.

And there's also going to come times where you're going to want the Lord to do it as you sit by passively. Well, Lord, okay, if you just want to strengthen me, fine. Go ahead and do it.

No, God will say, no. Here's my strength. You come get it.

You come strengthen yourself in me. You come to me and get it. God says strengthen yourself in me.

You know, it's kind of like thinking of your child watching TV, sitting on the couch. Dad, can I have something to drink? Yeah, get it yourself. We've made the provision for you.

You know where it is. And look, sometimes you might bring your kid something, right? You might bring it to them. Other times you'll say, go get it yourself.

Well, this is how the Lord deals with us. There you are. You need the Lord's strength.

You're sitting on the couch. You say, Lord, I need strength. Well, sometimes the Lord will bring it to you.

Sometimes the Lord will send somebody to give it to you. But sometimes the Lord will say, you know where it is. You get up and get it.

You come strengthen yourself in me. God holds out his strength. Sometimes you say, you come to me and get it.

God's strength was there for David all the time. But now David reaches out in himself and he takes it for himself in the Lord is God. Friends, don't despise it when the Lord puts you in that place.

Boldly step out and say, okay, Lord, I'm going to come and take that strength that you offer to me. And perhaps most precious of all, if you notice at the end of verse 6, it says, but David strengthened himself in the Lord is God. Isn't that great? It was in the Lord.

In the Lord. That's how David strengthened himself. This wasn't some kind of rah-rah cheerleader kind of positive thinking.

There's a silver lining on every cloud. You know, hakuna matata. Let's just be happy.

You know, mumbo jumbo. That stuff gets so annoying after a while. This was the strength of the living God making itself real in the heart and in the life of a hurting, broken man.

This was strength for recognition. Strength for brokenness. Strength for repentance.

Strength for determination to win back what the enemy had stolen. This was the same strength that rose Jesus from the dead. That's what the Lord wants to give you.

The same strength that brought Jesus out of that tomb. That's what the Lord wants to give unto you. Friends, this is real strength.

So David strengthened himself in the Lord is God. Now, how did David do this? How do you do it? How? Well, we're not told exactly how are we. I'll just suggest to you a way that David might have done it.

I'll suggest to you that David might have done it by remembering three things. First off, I think David could have strengthened himself in the Lord by remembering God's love. You know, when we're feeling weak in the Lord, we're usually not vitally aware of His love.

And at this point of total loss, David could see the love of God. He'd say, no way, no way. You come back and the city is a burned out ghost town.

You say, oh, thank you, Lord, I know you love me so much. It doesn't work like that, does it? You know, it doesn't matter how bad your loss is. It doesn't matter how great your pain is.

You can see some emblem of the Lord's love in it. And I know David could hear. I know David could think back and say, Lord, I know you love me.

I know you love me, Lord, because if you didn't love me, you wouldn't have had the Philistines reject me. Because if the Philistines wouldn't have rejected me, then we wouldn't have come home now. We would have been all fighting with the Philistines.

We wouldn't have been home for months until now. And we wouldn't have come upon this scene freshly after it happened. And we wouldn't have the chance of recovering what's been taken.

Thank you, Lord, for loving me enough to have the Philistines reject me so that we came home right away while the trail was still fresh. Lord, you love me. It doesn't matter what the situation is.

There is some place where you can see an emblem, a picture, a sign to you of the Lord's love in your life. And if you can't find anything, then let me point you to the cross of Jesus Christ. The Son of God came down and became a man and died on a cross, a shameful death on a cross, bearing the sin that you and I deserve to have punished in ourselves.

He took the punishment that we deserved. And that's love. You can know that the Lord loves you.

And David remembered that the Lord loves him. I think that David could have strengthened himself remembering God's promise and calling. He could shake his head and clear the fog that had set about it for the last year or so and say, wait a minute, I'm a man anointed by God, called by God, and promised by God to be the next king of Israel.

I have a high calling, I have a high promise from God, and He hasn't taken it away. I need to start living according to that destiny. God hasn't called me to be the mayor over a burned out city.

He wants me to be king over God's people. That's what I'm going for. That's what I'm heading towards.

And David could thank God and see the glory of His power in this high call, and that would have strengthened David. I think finally David could have strengthened himself by remembering God's past deliverance. He could say, you know, this is a bad spot, no doubt about it.

But remember all the times the Lord delivered me out of a bad spot before? There I was, tending the sheep as a shepherd, and a lion comes. That's a bad spot. The Lord delivered me out of that.

There I am, facing Goliath. That's a bad spot. The Lord delivered me out of that one.

Time after time after time, David could say, you know what? God delivered me before. He didn't do it just to abandon me now. God is still on the throne.

He's done it before. He'll do it again. That'll strengthen you in the Lord moment.

So I think that David could very well have strengthened himself by remembering the Lord's love, remembering the Lord's promise and calling, and remembering the Lord's past deliverance. Don't you want to strengthen yourself in the Lord this morning? The Lord has something precious to give you in His strength. He's reaching out to you right now this morning.

He's saying, receive that strength. Maybe it's strength to come to Him for the first time, to receive salvation in Jesus Christ. Maybe it's strength for you to come and to get your life right with Him.

Maybe you're the one this morning who finds yourself in a place you never thought you would be. The Lord comes and He offers His strength and He says, come on, get right with me. Maybe you're walking great with the Lord, but He's called you to some high challenge, some wonderful destiny, and you need His strength to do it.

Well, strengthen yourself in the Lord your God. Remember His love, remember His promise and calling, and remember His past deliverance, and you'll strengthen yourself in the Lord. Let's pray together and thank the Lord for that.

Lord, we pray this morning that You would give us Your strength. I know, Lord, that this is a prayer that applies to every single person here. There's not a single person in our midst who doesn't need Your strength.

We all need it, God. So, Father, I pray that You'd pour it out upon us together in Jesus' name. I pray, Lord, for the hurting heart this morning that needs to trust in Jesus Christ for the first time.

I pray that You'd give them the strength and the faith to trust in You. If that's you right now, just say to the Lord, yes, Lord, that's me, I need it. I pray, Lord, for the person who finds himself in the place they never thought they would be.

They're ashamed, Lord. It's terrible. But, God, they want it to be different now.

I pray that You'd give them the strength, Lord, to see it and to turn around for the glory of Jesus. I pray, Lord, for the person who needs the strength to go onward and upward, to move from glory to glory. Lord, pour out Your strength upon them also.

Lord, help us to walk with You and for You this week, receiving and honoring You in Your strength. We pray this in Jesus' precious name. Amen.

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