

A Man After God's Own Heart

by John Johnson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being a person after God's own heart through obedience, faith, and responding to His grace, as exemplified in the life of David.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 16:7, 1 Samuel 17:45, 1 Chronicles 29:28, Proverbs 4:23, Hebrews 12:1

Topics: "Faith And Obedience", "Overcoming Evil"

Description

John Johnson preaches about the life of David, a man after God's own heart, focusing on his choosing, anointing, and his victory over evil. He emphasizes the importance of responding to God's grace from the heart, rather than just outward appearances, and the need for obedience to God's call. Through David's example of facing Goliath, he encourages believers to stand firm in God's power and overcome evil in the world, highlighting the significance of finishing strong in faith and giving praise and glory to God.

Transcript

1 Samuel 16:1-7, 10-13, 32-36.

We welcome you to the gospel. I trust that God will speak to us all. We all need the Saviour. There's nothing finer that we want to talk about than the Lord Jesus, as the means of meeting every situation that we find ourselves in. We're going to speak later on about some things that happened in David's life - it says of David that he was a man after God's own heart - and the end result of what happens to one who loves Him and seeks to serve Him.

David's story is a long one, and I want to speak on two things about David today. One is the choosing and anointing; the other is dealing with what is obnoxious to God - how God used him to overcome evil. And the end result of all that happened in David's life (and of what will happen in our lives if we give them over to God) is praise back to God, which is so rightly due to Him. That's the final analysis of what a Christian should be when he's been delivered, set free. He then knows that his life is hid in Christ, and that the new life is found not on this earth, so to speak, but he draws his power from above. And we'll see the power which comes as a result of David's obedience to God.

God does things in ways that we sometimes don't understand. Man would have certain men before him, where God chooses to have others. Here we perceive a family of eight, Jesse's family. No doubt they were all good, upstanding young men, who were able to do many good things. But God had chosen someone, and as the first one came up who was tall, good-looking, and had everything going for him, immediately

the thought in man's mind was 'this is the person'. They looked upon his outward appearance. Let me tell you something, young friend, that God looks deeper than your appearance. He looks deep down in the heart to see what there is responding to His overtures of grace, and He is looking in your heart today, seeing what you desire to do, seeing whether you desire to know Him, seeing whether you desire to follow Him. All of these sons who came past might have had something good in their outward appearance, but God is not so interested in what a person looks like outside, although He wouldn't want him to look sloppy. There's a certain amount of respect when we come to the things of God. But man was looking upon the outward, and Samuel the prophet was looking upon the outward appearance. But God said, 'No. What I look at is not what is outside, but what comes from inside'. The Bible says that out of the heart are the issues of life (Proverbs 4:23).

So here we have these people coming right past, doing the right thing and standing before him, and no doubt there was a crowd of people watching. They'd been sanctified, they'd had a sacrifice, and here they were all in one place, and one comes after the other - you might say, 'along the catwalk of life' - all displaying their virtues. Many people today are just like that - displaying the virtues of an outward appearance, but deep down there's nothing there, nothing that responds to the overtures of God's grace.

Let it not be said that anyone in this room today is not responding to the overtures of God's grace, because God wants you. No matter what other people might think of you, whether you do or don't match up to the expectations of individual people or collective people, God is not interested in that! He is interested in whether you in your own heart and life are going to respond to the things of God, whether you desire in your heart to serve Him with all your love, with all your might, with all your strength! For nothing less will do for God. And if you want to serve God, you have to be committed to the things of God.

So these seven men came past, and he said, 'Is that all'? You would have thought that out of the seven they would have found someone. But, oh no. Are there any left? Oh well, there's only the youngest. He's out in the field, looking after the sheep. What a beautiful expression of the Lord Jesus - the greatest Shepherd that there ever was, who loved the sheep; and when one went away He went out to find it. There had been a hundred, but then there were only ninety-nine. And He said, 'look, who would go after him?' God will go out a long way after you today, to secure you for His own pleasure - and rightly so, because He gave the Lord Jesus, who came to this scene of rejection, who was hated, scorned, mocked, and whipped, and a crown of thorns placed upon that blessed brow. "Man of sorrows! what a name ... Ruined sinners to redeem!" That's the Saviour, and David is someone after God's own heart, and was like God, like Jesus in a way. Here he is, the shepherd looking after the sheep in obscurity, away from the public eye. He wasn't sitting down or standing up, making a show of himself. He was doing a job and doing it well. We'll find, at times, later on when he faced the Philistines, how God used him simply because he was obedient to God's call. Young people, older people, are you obedient to God's call? God desires to have you. If nobody else wants you, God wants you and He loves you. Make no mistake, if the whole world was to hate you, and you found Jesus as your Saviour, God loves you. He's loved you not because you're a sinner - He doesn't love you sinning, but He loves you because Jesus gave His life for you on the blessed cross of Calvary. Jesus' precious blood was shed, and the Bible tells us that without the shedding of blood there is no remission for our sins. Oh, friend, take heed to the overtures of God's wonderful grace!

So this young man was brought, and the prophet's heart immediately responded as he looked upon him. The Bible says he was a man after God's own heart. What a response! You can tell when somebody loves God - there's an immediate response to your own heart because you have that little link of affection that comes as a result of it. And David came, and he was anointed.

Now I want to go a bit further on in David's life. He went back to the sheep, to look after them. What had happened here didn't affect him. He went back to the sheep to do the job that God had called him for at that moment. And God was going to call him again, and going to use him! Wherever you are, whatever you're doing, you might think your life's nothing special. You might think that God is not using you, or you're waiting for something to happen. Then God will use you if you're prepared to be used. Make no mistake about that. God wants people in the world that rejects Him today to stand up and be counted in the things of God. It was never more so in the history of mankind than in the day we live, where there is a need for those who love Jesus to stand firm to the truth, and to be living the life that God has called them for. Not to just go along haphazardly and expect something to happen. There must be a certain amount of discipline in your life, and a response to God's overtures of grace. He is calling today, as He has called down through the ages in the Scriptures, as He has called since He went from this scene. But the calling will not go on too long. The time will come when the call will cease. How wonderful to be ready for that call, when the Saviour comes. We say, "Come, Lord Jesus". There will be nothing finer than that. Meanwhile, He has left us here for a purpose. He has left us here to do something, to be usable.

My friends, David went back to the sheep. And one day, there came a great big man by name Goliath, a man of huge stature. Who could do anything against this man as he stood there in the valley? Can you picture the deep valley down there? On one side are the Philistines, and on the other the Israelites - Saul and all his men. And you couldn't mistake Goliath. He was big! He was tough! He had great big armor on! Who could stand against him? God! Goliath didn't know that God could do things - far exceedingly above anything that he might think of! He thought he was invincible! Don't think you're invincible to God!

How is your life going, friend? Have you given your life to Jesus? Has there been a change in your life to correspond with what you confess? That's what God looks for. He doesn't look for something outward in appearance. He looks for something which is real and precious, deep down in the hearts of individuals. So David came along. He was sent to take some bread and various other food stuff to his brothers. He came to where they were, and as he was there he heard this great big fellow cursing and swearing and saying, 'Whoever kills me will be the boss', so to speak, 'and can have this and that and the other'.

Goliath didn't know that God was living, and here he was defying, not just the children of Israel, but God - the One that David loved! But David was not going to stand there while someone was cursing his God. He was prepared to stand up, small in stature, but he had the power of God in him. How wonderful that is! David said, 'the Lord delivered me out of the paw of the lion and the bear, and he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine'. And Saul said to David, 'Go, and the Lord be with thee!' Then Saul got the armor out and put it on David. David put it on and tried it out. You know, you might go to a store and try something on, and it feels clumsy. It doesn't feel right. Well, David had the armor, but it was no use. He was not used to that sort of thing. God didn't want him to put on armor like the opposition. So God said to David, 'That's no good. I don't want you to fight with a sword'. And David said, 'No'. He told Saul, "I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them". How wonderful! So David went back to what he did know. He had a sling and he gathered five smooth stones. And the Philistine came and drew near to David, and the man who bore the shield. Can you imagine this hu-u-uge brute of a man? He really was! Great big armor all around his face! He could hardly walk! And here he is, facing David. He looks at David and says, 'Who brought you here? Go back home!' But David stood firm. And he said to him, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield"; - and I love this piece because it testifies to the power of God - "but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied! This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from

thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel".

Do we know that there's a God in Stawell? The same God is here in this room in Stawell! He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Glory be to His name! He's still the same God. He's still the One that can use you to overcome what is evil. "And it came to pass when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead". I was always fascinated as a young person to read these glorious stories in Scripture! There are heaps of them! They're alive - better than any videos you might get! They're here in Scripture, and they're exciting, and they're real! And God can use you just as He used a young person like David. So overcome evil! What is needed in the world today are upright persons who love the Lord and who are prepared to stand upright and be counted among the many who love and serve the Master.

So David slew the Philistine. Can you imagine the Philistines on the other bank when they saw their hero going across? Perhaps they said, 'Oh, it'll be over in a minute'. But were they mistaken! Oh dear, were they mistaken! For as small as David was and stood, he had a power in him that was greater than anything in the world. He had God with him! When you're able to stand where you are and do things in God's power, then things will happen in the world we live in today. What is needed is for all of us to stand firm, truthfully, and to have a sense of decency and holiness, "without which no one shall see the Lord". It doesn't mean that I put on a cloak and a collar and look religious. That's not it. What God is looking for is deeper. David had a deep response in his heart toward God. He loved God, and here he was doing this for God. It says that when he rose and went and cut the head off, that the sword he used was that of the man himself, the Philistine, the giant! He got his sword, and it must have been quite heavy, but it was enough to bring down and chop the head off. Then he took the head back to Saul. It must have been a fair weight. David must have been fairly strong, because he had a big head to swat. Goliath had a big head not only in its size but in its attitude! But there it was, it was smitten up! He couldn't do anything! He wasn't able to say anything! He was silenced once and for all by God's power! How wonderful it is to know that people can be silenced when God works in their lives!

May I say in closing that in 1 Chronicles 29 we see the end result of David's life. It would take too long to go through the whole of Samuel and tell you all the details of the things David did, how he failed and was restored. But when he finished his life, it could be said of him that he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour. What a wonderful thing to finish on that note! How we started may be differently, but it's how we finish that's going to count. And God is looking for something real and precious in our last days here on this scene. It might be the last time you hear me preach at Stawell. Jesus might come and take us away to Himself. But my beloved friends, let us know something of what it is to give the praise and glory which is due to God. Jesus has loved us with an everlasting love; He has come from heaven's highest glory to this scene to secure people for God's pleasure.

You have a choice: to respond to the overtures of God's grace, or to go on living the life that you want to live and find that one day you have to meet your Maker, just like this Philistine. He had been going on for a long time, overpowering many people, but one day he met his match, in a man who loved God. My friend, God wants to use you, just like He used David. May it be so, for His name's sake.

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