

Will You Be a Person After God's Own Heart?

"I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will"
(Acts 13:22).

Many Biblical heroes served God, did His will and bore a great testimony of their faith. There was one person that God said was a *man after [His] own heart*. What was different about David?

David captures our attention for the first time in Scripture as he kills the giant Goliath with only his faith in God and a slingshot. From then on, his name continues to be mentioned throughout the word of God – even to the last chapter.

His skill as a harp player soothes the troubled spirit of King Saul. Even after God chooses David to replace Saul as king of Israel, and Saul's jealousy and hatred of David leads him to pursue him with murder on his mind, David refuses to touch God's anointed even when the opportunity to kill Saul presented itself more than once. His relationship with Saul's son Jonathan is known as one of the most beautiful accounts of friendship ever known.

David's simple beginnings as a shepherd boy enabled him to write the most quoted Psalm of all time, Psalm 23. The Lord, who was David's Shepherd, is known as the Root and Offspring of David, born in Bethlehem, the City of David. When Gabriel appeared to Mary, he informed her that her Son would be given the throne of His father David.

The kingdom was divided after the reign of Solomon, David's son. The majority of the kings in Judah and Israel were evil. The few that followed God were said to have done *what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done*. During the turbulent years of the kings, God often stayed His hand of judgment for His sake *and the sake of [His] servant David*.

Certainly, David was not without sin. God does not sugarcoat the lives of His people. David sinned greatly, but when confronted with his sin, his repentance was complete and his relationship to God was restored. He bore the consequences of his sin. God, nevertheless, said that David did what was right in His eyes except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite (1 Kings 15:5). Although we know that David was not without sin, God also said he was a man after His own heart.

How many of us can say, or want to say, that we are a man or woman after God's own heart? How did David earn that distinction? What can we learn from his life that will lead to a closer relationship to God?

David was not the oldest or even the strongest of his brothers, yet because God looks on the heart, he knew that David would be one who would be faithful to His calling. When Saul disobeyed God (1 Samuel 13:8-13 – "kindled his own fire" – Richard's sermon on Isaiah 50: 10-11 – The Dark Night of the Soul), Samuel told Saul, *"But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord has commanded you"* (1 Samuel 13:14).

It is not until chapter 16 that David is first mentioned as having been the one chosen by God. When Samuel started to examine the other sons of Jesse for the one God was

calling to be king, the Lord said to Samuel, *"Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart"* (1 Samuel 16:7).

Addressing the synagogue in Antioch, Paul reminded them that God said, *"I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will"* (Acts 13:22). Paul continued, *"From this man's seed, according to the promise God raised up for Israel a Savior- Jesus"* (Acts 13:23).

After David died, *the eyes of the Lord move[d] to and fro throughout the earth that he may strongly support those whose heart is completely his* (2 Chronicles 16:9 NASB). God is still looking for those whose heart leads them to be a person after His own heart.

David's prayer in 1 Chronicles 17:16-27 reveals his seeking after God's heart and confessing that he is praying because it is in his own heart to do so.

Those who recognized Jesus as the Messiah would often say, *Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me* (Luke 18:38).

We find some clues to David's heart by reading his psalms. From these psalms, written at different times throughout his lifetime, we discover that he made predetermined choices about his relationship to God. In other words, he decided ahead of time that he would be loyal to God.

Study Guide

If you are in a study group, take turns reading these psalms. If you are doing the study alone, read them aloud to yourself. Emphasize "I will" as you read.

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around (3:6).

I will both lie down in peace and sleep for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety (4:8).

For to You I will pray. My voice You shall hear in the morning O Lord; in the morning I will direct it to You, and I will look up . . . I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy; in fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple. (5:2,3, 7).

I will praise the Lord according to His righteousness, and will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High (7:17).

I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvelous works. I will be glad and rejoice in You. I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High (9:1, 2).

I will sing to the Lord, because He has dealt bountifully with me (13:6).

I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel (16:7).

As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness (17:15).

The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies. I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the Gentiles, and sing praises to Your name (18:2, 3, 49).

I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. . . Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever (23: 4, 6).

I will wash my hands in innocence; so I will go about Your altar, O Lord . . . But as for me, I will walk in my integrity . . . In the congregations I will bless the Lord (26: 6, 11, 12).

Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord (27:6).

To You I will cry, O Lord my Rock, do not be silent to me (28:1).

I will extol You, O Lord, for You have lifted me up, and have not let my foes rejoice over me . . . O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever (30:1, 12).

I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth . . . Come, you children, listen to me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord (34:1,11).

I will give You thanks in the great assembly; I will praise You among many people (35:18).

I said, "I will guard my ways lest I sin with my tongue. I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle, while the wicked are before me"(39:1).

Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You (51:12-13).

I will praise You forever, because You have done it; and in the presence of Your saints I will wait on Your name, for it is good (52:9).

I will freely sacrifice to You, I will praise Your name, O Lord, for it is good (54:6).

As for me, I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me. Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice . . . But You, O God shall bring them down to the pit of destruction; bloodthirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in You (55:16-17, 23).

Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You. In God (I will praise His word), In God I have put my trust; I will not fear, what can flesh do to me? . . . In God (I will praise His word), In the Lord (I will praise His word), In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid, what can man do to me? Vows made to You are binding upon me, O God; I will render praises to You (56: 3-4,10,11, 12).

Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You; and in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge, until these calamities have passed by. I will cry out to God Most High, to God who performs all things for me . . . My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and give praise. Awake, my glory! Awake, lute and harp! I will

awaken the dawn. I will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples. I will sing to You among the nations (57:1-2, 7-9).

I will wait for You, O You his Strength, for God is my defense . . . But I will sing of Your power; Yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy in the morning; for You have been my defense and refuge in the day of my trouble. To You, O my Strength, I will sing praises, for God is my defense, My God of mercy (59:9, 16-17).

Hear my cry, O God; attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth I will cry to You, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I . . . I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the shelter of Your wings . . . So I will sing praise to Your name forever, that I may daily perform my vows (61:1, 2, 4, 8).

O God, You are my God; early will I seek You. . . because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise You. Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name . . . Because You have been my help, therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice (63:1, 3-4, 7).

I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving (69:30).

But I will hope continually, and will praise You yet more and more . . . I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of Your righteousness, of Yours only . . . also with the lute I will praise You – and Your faithfulness, O my God! To You I will sing with the harp, O Holy One of Israel (72:14, 16, 22).

I will sing of mercy and justice; to You, O Lord, I will sing praises. I will behave wisely in a perfect way. Oh, when will You come to me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set nothing wicked before my eyes . . . I will not know wickedness (101:1-4). I will sing and give praise, even with my glory. Awake, lute and harp! I will awaken the dawn. I will praise You O Lord, among the peoples, and I will sing praises to You among the nations (108:1-3).

I will greatly praise the Lord with my mouth; Yes, I will praise Him among the multitude (109:30).

For the sake of my brethren and companions, I will now say, “Peace be with you.” Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your good (122:8-9).

I will praise You with my whole heart; before the gods I will sing praises to You. I will worship toward Your holy temple, and praise Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; for You have magnified Your word above all Your name (138:1-2).

I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well (139:14).

I will extol You, my God, O King; and I will bless Your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless You, and I will praise Your name forever and ever (145:1-2).

I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty, and on Your wondrous works. Men shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts, and I will declare Your greatness (145:5-6).

Study Guide

Pay attention to the frequency with which David made some predetermined choices. Use these as a springboard for discussion.

David said, "I will:"

Praise God

Praise the Lord according to His righteousness – praise You with my whole heart – praise You among many people – praise You forever – praise Your name, O Lord, for it is good – praise His word – praise His word – praise His word – render praises to You – sing and give praise – awaken the dawn, praise You, sing to You among the nations – sing praise to Your name forever, that I may daily perform my vows – my lips shall praise You. Thus I will bless You while I live: I will lift up my hands in Your name – praise You yet more and more – lift up my hands in Your name

Sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High – sing praise to Your name, O Most High – sing to the Lord because He has dealt bountifully with me – sing praises to the Lord – sing and give praise – sing of Your power – sing aloud of Your mercy – sing praises for God is my defense – praise the name of God with a song and will magnify Him with thanksgiving – also with the lute I will praise You – sing with the harp – sing of mercy and justice – sing praises – sing and give praise – awaken to the dawn – praise You, O Lord among the peoples – sing praises to You among the nations – greatly praise the Lord with my mouth – praise Him among the multitude – praise You with my whole heart – worship toward You holy temple – praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made – praise Your name forever and ever

Pray

Pray – will cry – call upon God, and the Lord shall save me. Evening and morning and noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice – cry out to God Most High – from the end of the earth I will cry to You

Worship

Come into Your house – dwell in the house of the Lord forever – abide in Your tabernacle forever - Worship toward Your holy temple
Bless the Lord – in the congregations I will bless the Lord

Bless the Lord – bless Your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless you
Extol You – extol You, my God O King (extol-praise enthusiastically)
Go about Your altar

Witness

Tell of all Your marvelous works – make mention of Your righteousness – declare Your greatness

Give Thanks

Give thanks – give thanks to You forever –

give You thanks in the great assembly

Not Be Afraid

Not be afraid – fear no evil – not be afraid, what can man do to me? – whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You – in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge

Trust

Trust – trust in You. – my soul trusts in You – trust in the shelter of Your wings

Rejoice

Be glad and rejoice in You – in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice

Offer sacrifices of joy – freely sacrifice to You

Live Righteously

See Your face in righteousness

Wash my hands in innocence

Walk in my integrity

Behave wisely

Walk within my house with a perfect heart

Set nothing wicked before my eyes – not know wickedness

Guard my ways lest I sin with my tongue – restrain my mouth

Teach Others

Teach (children) the fear of the Lord – teach transgressors Your ways

Wait and Meditate on the Lord

Wait on Your name, Wait for You

Meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty and on Your wondrous works

Live in Peace, Hope, and Strength of the Lord

Lie down in peace

Look up

Hope continually

Go in the strength of the Lord God

Just as David did, we have the choice to determine whether or not we will follow God. Those choices can make us people after God's own heart.

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