

37. The Book of 1 Samuel—22:1-5

“Transformed Lives”

(2/21/16)

King David is one of my all-time favorite Bible heroes—I love his ruggedness and courage, I love his reckless faith for God—he was a man’s man.

You remember that David was anointed king of Israel by Samuel while Saul was still on the throne.

When Saul heard that David had been anointed king, he purposed to kill him and remove him as a threat to the throne.

This led to 10 years of running from Saul, living in caves out in the Judean wilderness—which is where we pick up the story—with David on the run:

1 Samuel 22:1 (NKJV)

¹ David therefore departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. And when his brothers and all his father's house heard *it*, they went down there to him.

I have actually been in this cave. (Explain)

David was at a low point in his life at this time—think about it—he was a wanted man with a death sentence hanging over his head.

He was alone and isolated, living in a cave with a future that was uncertain.

Look, living in the “cave” of loneliness and uncertainty isn’t an easy place to be in.

It’s dark and discouraging and David could have slipped in a deep depression where he might have been tempted to take his life.

But instead he chose to turn the cave into a cathedral and his circumstance into a sanctuary.

In other words he chose to focus on God and not on the situation he found himself in—the result was he wrote Psalm 57 and Psalm 142 in that cave—I’ll just read you some of Ps.57:

Psalm 57:5-11 (NKJV)

⁵ Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; *Let Your glory be* above all the earth. ⁶ They have prepared a net for my steps; My soul is bowed down; They have dug a pit before me; Into the midst of it they *themselves* have fallen... ⁷ My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and give praise. ⁸ Awake, my glory! Awake, lute and harp! I will awaken the dawn. ⁹ I will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing to You among the nations. ¹⁰ For Your mercy reaches unto the heavens, And Your truth unto the clouds. ¹¹ Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; *Let Your glory be* above all the earth.

Many years later the prophet Elijah was in a cave hiding from wicked queen Jezebel who had vowed to hunt him down and kill him...(1Kings 19)

I think it’s more common than we realize that our circumstances will drive us to the cave of fear, loneliness, uncertainty and self-pity where we isolate ourselves—but God will use the experience for good if we’ll let Him.

One author in commenting on this said—

“We want to be comfortable—but Gods knows that our souls do not grow in times of comfort (Romans 5:3–5). Therefore, He puts us in places where His work can be done, where His Word takes root. If you’re in a cave today, you’re in good company because God does deep work in hard places.”

1 Peter 5:9-10 (NLT)

⁹ Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your Christian brothers and sisters all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are. ¹⁰ In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation.

One of the ways the Lord does this for those who are going through a difficult time—is to send other believers to you to restore, support and strengthen you.

This is exactly what He did in David’s life (v.2)—but before we look at that let’s look quickly at verses 3-5:

1 Samuel 22:3-4 (NKJV)

³ Then David went from there to Mizpah of Moab; and he said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and mother come here with you, till I know what God will do for me." ⁴ So he brought them before the king of Moab, and they dwelt with him all the time that David was in the stronghold.

It might seem strange for David to go to the king of Moab and ask him to let his family live there so that he would watch over and protect them while he was on the run from Saul.

But you need to remember that the Moabites were related to David—his great-grandmother Ruth was a Moabite.

1 Samuel 22:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Now the prophet Gad said to David, "Do not stay in the stronghold; depart, and go to the land of Judah." So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth.

Now, one of the reasons I love David so much is because he had such a tremendous heart for God—in fact God called David *a man after His own heart*.

And as such David had this amazing ability, because of his heart for God, to draw people to him and inspire those around him.

While David was out in the wilderness running from Saul word got out and suddenly men came from all over the land to join up with him.

1 Samuel 22:2

And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him.

Not exactly the kind of guys you'd think would make a good army—but as these men spent time with David an interesting thing began to happen—a transformation began to take place.

As we have pointed out several times already in this study—David was a flawed man.

And yet more is written of him than any other man in the O.T. because he was a man after God's heart—a man who loved and was loyal to God.

And as these four hundred men spent time with him (the number eventually grew to six hundred)—but as they spent time with him they became like him—men after God's heart.

And in the process this rag-tag group of misfits and malcontents became a super-elite group of fighting men—possibly the finest soldiers the world has ever seen.

This transformation is exactly what happens with every person that joins up and hangs out with the Son of David, Jesus Christ we become like Him (2Cor. 3:18) men and women with His heart—

And it seems the greater the dysfunction—the greater the transformation!

We see this same transformation take place with the men Jesus chose to be His apostles.

Matthew 10:2-4 (NKJV)

² Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the *son* of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

I want you to take a good hard look at the men Jesus chose to start the most important religious movement in the history of mankind:

- He chose one man who was impulsive and unstable—Simon.
- A couple of hot heads (James and John);
- A skeptic named Nathanael;
- A doubter named Thomas;
- A political rabble-rouser/assassin named Simon the Zealot—and these were the ‘good’ ones compared with Judas!

I mean would you have chosen these men for this ministry?—And yet they were transformed in the presence of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God never chooses a person to use based on what they are at that moment—but based on what He knows they can become through His power and grace.

The world looks for those who are strong, self-confident and assertive to be leaders.

The world thinks that only those who are highly intelligent and gifted with natural abilities can be leaders.

The world even takes outward appearance into consideration when choosing its leaders (height, stature and beauty).

The prophet Samuel made that mistake when God sent him to anoint the new king of Israel who would take Saul's place—

1 Samuel 16:6-7 (NKJV)

⁶ So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the LORD'S anointed *is* before Him." ⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his 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.*" (David the shepherd boy)

2 Chronicles 16:9 (NKJV)

⁹ "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of *those* whose heart is loyal to Him...

And so if a person has a heart for God regardless of their physical attributes or their prior moral failings—they can be used by God and in fact are often chosen by God to serve Him before someone who is very gifted—

As the apostle Paul tells us—

1 Corinthians 1:26-31 (NLT)

²⁶ Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. ²⁷ Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. ²⁸ God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important. ²⁹ As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.

The title of this message is *“Transformed Lives.”*

In this passage David becomes a type of Christ, and these four hundred men that joined themselves to him are a type of all believers in Christ who have joined ourselves to Jesus as His soldiers—

2 Timothy 2:3-4 (NLT)

³ Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them.

The idea here that I want to challenge you with is—have you really joined yourself to Jesus?

Have you made a genuine commitment to Him?

Are you a born again believer in Jesus Christ?

“Well I believe in Him. I went forward at a Billy Graham or Greg Laurie crusade and prayed to receive Him as my Savior—what more can I do?”

You can do as Paul admonished—

2 Corinthians 13:5 (NASB)

⁵ Test yourselves *to see* if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?

Jesus said that not everyone who said to Him ‘*Lord, Lord*’ would be going to heaven—why not, what else is the Lord looking for?

He’s looking for the fruit of obedience that always manifests itself in the life of a person who has truly received Him into their heart as Lord and Savior—

1 John 2:3-6 (NLT)

³ And we can be sure that we know him if we obey his commandments. ⁴ If someone claims, “I know God,” but doesn’t obey God’s commandments, that person is a liar and is not living in the truth. ⁵ But those who obey God’s word truly show how completely they love him. That is how we know we are living in him. ⁶ Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did.

Even as Jesus said was the test of genuineness—“*you will know them by their fruit.*”

The fruit the Lord was referring to was the fruit of obedience—also known as the fruit of a transformed life.

Jesus said in John 15, in His famous “vine and branch” discourse—when a person is truly connected to Him by saving faith the Holy Spirit will be inside that person and inevitable result will be they will bear fruit—the fruit of a changed or transformed life!

People can argue with our theology—but they can’t argue with a changed life. (Comment)

Remember the solemn warning Jesus gave to all those that claim to know Him and are His disciples—

Matthew 7:21-23 (NKJV)

²¹ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

He is basically saying, “*Make sure you’re not deceiving yourself.*”

Many will be shocked on the Day of Judgment to discover they won’t be going to heaven.

And remember who Jesus is talking to here—these aren’t atheists or agnostics.

No, these are those who were church goers—but Jesus is saying they won’t be going to heaven.

How could this have happened to them? How did they wind up being so deceived?

Many people have been deceived by false teachers, pastors, T.V. evangelists—there are many who go to hell because they have sat under the teaching of false doctrine and have been deceived.

But many others go to hell who sat under the teaching of the truth yet have never made a real commitment to Jesus Christ—these have deceived themselves into believing they are Christians.

What are some of the causes of self-deception?

1. A false sense of assurance

This is often due to the fact that many Christians, after they pray with someone to receive the Lord, will then tell them to never doubt their salvation from that moment on—to do so, they say, is to doubt the Word of God and give place to the devil.

The problem with that is we don't know what's in their heart—we can't be certain that they have received Jesus Christ in truth and are now born again—we have to wait and see if spiritual fruit is produced in their lives.

2. A failure of self-examination

These tend to be the folks who take God's love or His grace or both to such an extreme that they never really face honestly and therefore never really take seriously the sin in their lives.

These people are sprinkled throughout the church—these are those who feel that as long as they believe in God, go to church once in a while, and try to live a “good life”—then God's love and grace will cover them and eventually carry them to heaven someday.

And because of that mindset they never practice any self-examination—even though we are commanded in the N.T. to do that very thing.

3. A fixation on religious activities

There are many people who have grown up in church—or maybe they discovered church later in life but now attend faithfully and are involved extensively.

They go to church and enjoy singing the songs, hearing the sermons, reading the Bible and being involved in all their church's functions, activities and outreaches—which is not necessarily a bad thing unless they become a substitute for a true relationship with God.

Don't forget that the people Jesus talks about in Matt. 7:21-23 are not the irreligious they are the very religious who apparently had based their relationship with God on their religious activities—only to hear Jesus say to them on the Day of Judgment—*"I never knew you..."*

4. A fair exchange approach

A fourth cause of self-deception is what some have called the *"fair exchange"*, or *"balancing out"*, approach.

This is the person that, when they see something wrong in their life, instead of repenting and turning from disobedience to obedience toward what God has said—instead they find something good in their life and make a 'fair exchange'.

In other words they rationalize it in their mind by thinking that the good things they do balance out the bad, and that the positive cancels out the negative. (Comment)

Paul the apostle said, *"If we judge ourselves now—we will not have to be judged by God someday."* (Explain)

Examine the evidence in your own life and make an honest judgment—is your life different today than it was before you "accepted" Jesus as your Savior?

Can you look at your life now and say a transformation has taken place—*"I'm not the same person I used to be. I can honestly say that the things I used to do (party, take drugs, have sex, lie, steal etc.) have been replaced with a desire to be in church, to read the Bible, to pray, hang out with other Christians and tell people about Jesus."*

A transformed life is the greatest proof of a new heart.