

David, a Man after God's Own Heart

7/10/2016

Who is this phrase applying to- a man after God's own heart?

We are so used to hearing this phrase,
 and using this phrase,
 we may not know where it comes from.
 "We" have chosen to do a spin-off of this phrase
 as our theme for 2016,
 (Becoming a Family After God's Own Heart)
 and to do our Vacation Bible School based on this phrase,
 and we are teaching an adult Bible class
 on this theme for the summer...

So- where does the phrase come from, anyway?

Well, it comes from a story not even about David,
 and we only know that it applies to David
 because of the chronology of
who gets anointed to be King next...

1 Samuel 13:3-

³ Jonathan attacked the Philistine outpost at Geba, and the Philistines heard about it. Then Saul had the trumpet blown throughout the land and said, "Let the Hebrews hear!" ⁴ So all Israel heard the news: "Saul has attacked the Philistine outpost, and now Israel has become a stench to the Philistines." And the people were summoned to join Saul at Gilgal.

Now the whole deal of wanting a king was to have someone who would lead them into battle (1 Sam. 8:7-20).

And the LORD told (Samuel): “Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.

⁸ As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you.

⁹ Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do.”

¹⁰ Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king.

¹¹ He said, “This is what the king who will reign over you will do: He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots.

¹² Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and others to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.

¹³ He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers.

¹⁴ He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants.

¹⁵ He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants.

¹⁶ Your menservants and maidservants and the best of your cattle and donkeys he will take for his own use.

¹⁷ He will take a tenth of your flocks,
and you yourselves will become his slaves.

¹⁸ When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, and the LORD will not answer you in that day.”

¹⁹ But the people refused to listen to Samuel.

“No!” they said. “We want a king over us.”

²⁰ Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles.”

So when “King Saul” sounds the battle trumpet, they are supposed to come out and fight with him; that’s kind of the deal. That’s why the fact that he was taller than the average guy was important. The problem is, “King Saul’s son” Jonathan has provoked a fight that may be more than anybody bargained for.

1 Samuel 13:5

⁵ The Philistines assembled to fight Israel, with three thousand chariots, six thousand charioteers, and soldiers as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They went up and camped at Micmash, east of Beth Aven.

⁶ When the men of Israel saw that their situation was critical and that their army was hard pressed, they hid in caves and thickets, among the rocks, and in pits and cisterns. ⁷ Some Hebrews even crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead.

Saul remained at Gilgal,

and all the troops with him were quaking with fear.

⁸ He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel;

but Samuel did not come to Gilgal,

and Saul’s men began to scatter.

⁹ So he said, “Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings.” And Saul offered up the burnt offering.

¹⁰ Just as he finished making the offering,

Samuel arrived, and Saul went out to greet him.

¹¹ “What have you done?” asked Samuel.

Saul replied, “When I saw that the men were scattering,
and that you did not come at the set time,

and that the Philistines were assembling at Micmash,

¹² I thought, ‘Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the LORD’s favor.’

So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering.”

¹³ “You acted foolishly,” Samuel said.

“You have not kept the command
the LORD your God gave you;
if you had, he would have established
your kingdom over Israel for all time.”

¹⁴ But now your kingdom will not endure;
the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart
and appointed him leader of his people,
because you have not kept the LORD’s command.”

Somehow there is a connection between
keeping the Lord’s command,
even when the odds seemed stacked against you...
...and being a person after God’s own heart.

If only he had kept the Lord’s command...
how might history have been different for Saul?

Jesus might have come through the lineage of Saul,
instead of the line of David.

Fear made Saul disobey the Lord’s command.
Not being able to see a clear path to victory.
And so he blinked... and disobeyed.

There are things that make sense
from the world’s point of view.

1. You stack the deck in your favor.
2. You bribe, cheat, lie, steal- to guarantee outcomes.
3. You appeal to pride, lust, fear, prejudice,
to get people to do what you want them to.

We ALL “want a king,”
someone else to fight our battles for us... (WHY?)

Because battles are scary, dangerous, inconvenient.
People get hurt in battles. Better to put the king out front.

Let him make the hard calls,
be responsible for what happens.
 Then we can blame HIM...

But what kind of king do you want?

1. Do you want a king who will disobey God, out of fear?
2. Do you want a king who will play the odds,
make decisions based on opinion polls,
 or one who will trust in God to protect His people?

These are not abstract questions, irrelevant for today.

Kings -leaders- are important people.

People follow leaders, even when they shouldn't.

P.S. We are ALL leaders. We ALL influence somebody,
 whether it is our children, our neighbors,
 the people we work with.

God is still looking for "people after His own heart,"
leaders who will keep his commandments,
 (especially since so few do.)

This phrase comes out of
 a passage about a broken-hearted God...
 (Don't believe me?)

1 Sam. 15:35

Until the day Samuel died, he did not go to see Saul again,
 though Samuel mourned for him.
 And the LORD was grieved
 that he had made Saul king over Israel.

The very next verse talks about
 the anointing of David to be Saul's replacement.

God grieves, but then He moves on.

He wanted a man who would trust in HIM,
 who would strive to keep His commands,
even when the odds were stacked against him.

Listen to the difference

between David's approach to the Philistines, and Saul's.

First, again, Saul's-

1. The men are scattering,
2. Samuel's arrival is delayed... never his fault,
always someone else's.
3. The Philistines were coming...
 So I disobeyed the command of God.

And then there is David's approach, to a much bigger threat-
 somebody named Goliath, who by all rights,
 Saul SHOULD have already fought in battle...
 (That's his job, right? To lead the people in battle?)

I Samuel 17:26

David asked the men standing near him,
 "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine
 and removes this disgrace from Israel?
Who is this uncircumcised Philistine
 that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

I Samuel 17:34-37

³⁴ But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his
 father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came

and carried off a sheep from the flock,

³⁵ I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its
 mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it
 and killed it. ³⁶ Your servant has killed both the lion and the
 bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them,
 because he has defied the armies of the living God.

³⁷ The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”

I Samuel 17:45-47

David said to the Philistine, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

⁴⁶ This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I’ll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel.

⁴⁷ All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD’s, and he will give all of you into our hands.” (BAM! SMACKDOWN!)

1. I will stand up for God, and He will stand beside me.
2. I will have courage to face the giants in my world, because God, the mighty Lord of Hosts, is with me.
3. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
4. I will trust in the Lord’s deliverance.
5. I will do what’s right, even when it’s tough.
(And it’s tough a lot of the time, isn’t it?)

Saul was King... that’s pretty cool, but he had a job to do, and he failed horribly at it.
It’s not that he wasn’t a good warrior, because by worldly standards, he actually was pretty good.

But God wanted a leader who would share HIS priorities,
 who would defend HIS honor and glory,
 and would lead his people by example.

Saul was O for 3.

David messes up, too.

Unfortunately, sometimes we remember David for his sin,
 and not his heart or his obedience,
 or even his heart when he repents.

We do David a grave disservice by doing that.

God looks, not for perfection,
 but for a heart that seeks His will.

True then, true now.

What's your heart towards God?

Who is your heart more like, David's... or Saul's?

According to the Scriptures, both were good-looking.

Saul was taller, probably bigger build.

Saul at this point,

was a professional warrior, David, a shepherd boy.

Doesn't matter.

David had a heart for God. Read the Psalms... seriously.

So again I ask, is your heart more like David's, or Saul's?

The good news is that your heart can be changed,
 if you are more like Saul.

You can BECOME a person after God's own heart,
 if you want to be one.

1. Read the Psalms. READ the Psalms...

3 per day and you'll be done in a month.

Hard to stop, once you start.

2. PRAY the Psalms. (Most ARE prayers, by the way.)

3. SING the Psalms.

It's incredible how many of our hymns
 come straight from the Psalms.
 ... Also praise and worship music on the radio.

And when we, as a people,
 are working to become people after God's own heart,
 we WILL BE a family after God's own heart,
 a community of folks

1. honoring God,
2. and caring for each other and for others,
3. and preaching God's goodness to our world.

That's what God has always been looking for,
 in the days of David and Saul, and in our world today.

Thank you to all who have worked so hard
 to prepare for this week's Vacation bible School.

Thanks to all who will serve this week.

Thanks to all of you who pray for kids' lives to be changed,
 as a result of something said or done this week.

1. Read the Psalms
2. Pray the Psalms.
3. Sing the Psalms... Amen?