



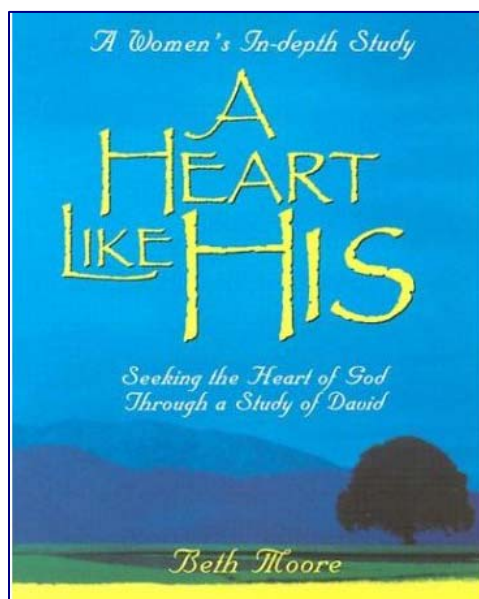
DEAN WELCH - TEACHER

**DAVID & HIS TERRIBLE, HORRIBLE,
NO GOOD, VERY BAD DAY**
[1 SAMUEL 30: 1-6]

WEEKLY SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON


MARCH 9, 2008

FROM THE **MASTER WORKS** SERIES STUDY OF:



DAVID & HIS TERRIBLE, HORRIBLE, NO GOOD, VERY BAD DAY!

[1 SAMUEL 30:1-6]

 One of my favorite children's book tells a story about a little boy named Alexander who is having a bad day. A terrible day. A terrible, horrible day. To be quite honest, it's a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day. But then, everybody has bad days, right? *Well, Alexander (probably not more than seven or eight years old) has "one of those days." I mean, nothing goes right. Not only does Alexander wake up with gum in his hair, but his mother forgets to pack him dessert, and his best friend at school decides he's not his best friend anymore. If that's not bad enough, when he and his brothers go to the dentist, Alexander's brother's don't have any cavities but—he does!. And just when it can't get any worse, there are lima beans for supper—and he hates lima beans. There's kissing on TV—and he hates kissing. His bath was too hot. He got soap in his eyes and his marble went down the drain. He had to sleep in his railroad train pajamas—and he hates his railroad train pajamas. It's enough to make say that he wants to go to Australia. If you've ever heard or read the story by Judith Viorst about Alexander's struggles, then you can identify with Alexander and the obstacles he encounters—the daily dramas of life. But also, just as Alexander learned, bad days happen—even in Australia.*

Today, as we continue with Week Two of our series about David from Beth Moore's bible study, [A Heart Like His](#), I think we can all agree that this week David was also having one of those terrible, horrible, no good, very bad days! I hope you had time this week to study your lesson and read the scriptures from 1 Samuel 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31 and a little into 2 Samuel 1. In our lesson this week, the lives of David and Saul are compared and contrasted. While Saul spiraled out of control, David experienced his own spiral of chaos. We do too—and unfortunately they're not very much like poor little Alexander's kind of bad days in the book, are they? Based on all we studied this week in God's Word, we

might easily conclude that relationships are pretty risky. David's turbulent relationship with Saul ended in tragedy. His deep relationship with Jonathan ended in loss and loneliness. And David's relationship with the men under his command left him momentarily with no one except God.

From your reading of the lesson and scriptures this week, do you recall how Saul dealt with his defeat and chaos in the face of the Philistines pending attack? Let's begin with **1 SAMUEL 31:1-3 (NIV)**: *¹Now the Philistines fought against Israel; the Israelites fled before them, and many fell slain on Mount Gilboa. ²The Philistines pressed hard after Saul and his sons, and they killed his sons Jonathan, Abinadab and Malki-Shua. ³The fighting grew fierce around Saul, and when the archers overtook him, they wounded him critically.* So, Saul's three sons are dead—including David's best friend, Jonathan and Saul has been critically wounded. So, what did he do? Remember?

Continuing with **Verse 4**, let's read on: *⁴Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and run me through, or these uncircumcised fellows will come and run me through and abuse me." But his armor-bearer was terrified and would not do it; so Saul took his own sword and fell on it. ⁵When the armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died with him. ⁶So Saul and his three sons and his armor-bearer and all his men died together that same day.* Saul, the first anointed king of Israel, couldn't face defeat at the hands of the Philistines, so he decided it was better to take his own life.

But, what about David all this time? Do you remember what he did? [DAVID FLED FROM SAUL'S PURSUIT AND JOINED UP WITH THE PHILISTINES] Turn back to **1 SAMUEL 27:1-4 (NIV)** and let's refresh our memory a little: *¹But David thought to himself, "One of these days I will be destroyed by the hand of Saul. The best thing I can do is to escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will give up searching for me anywhere in Israel, and I will slip out of his hand." ²So David and the six hundred men with him left and went over to Achish son of Maach king of Gath. ³David and his men*

settled in Gath with Achish. Each man had his family with him, and David had his two wives: Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail of Carmel, the widow of Nabal. ⁴When Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, he no longer searched for him.

Amazing isn't it? David, called to be the next anointed king of Israel, is scared and runs from King Saul. And he seems to join up forces with his country's worst enemy, the Philistines. They even give him his own town—Ziklag—and scripture tells us that David and his men lived there for a year and four months. Hiding?

So, let me get this straight. We have David running and hiding from Saul among the Philistines and all the while Saul is doing battle with the Philistines—ultimately taking his own life by falling on his sword. I'd say both David and Saul were having pretty terrible, horrible, no good, very bad days. So when you have one of those kind of days, what do you do? How do you cope and stay afloat?

We find out in **1 Samuel 29** that just before the Philistines go into battle against Saul, however, that the commanders of the Philistines object to David's presence and especially to David going into battle with them. So, they make Achish send David back home to Ziklag—and naturally David is not happy. He was probably frustrated and disappointed since he had not done anything wrong. Life's just not fair sometimes, is it? Anyone here ever been in a bad mood when you didn't get your way? How did you act or respond?

So, David and his men are returning home to Ziklag after suffering what he surely thought to be a professional loss—that is, not being able to go to war. Whew! And he's getting ready for another big loss—but this one of a personal nature! Let's pick up the story in **1 SAMUEL 30** zeroing in on verse **6** but starting with verse 1. (NIV): *¹David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day. Now the Amalekites had raided the Negev and Ziklag. They had attacked Ziklag and burned it, ²and had taken captive the women and all who were in it, both young and old. They killed none of them, but carried them off as they went on their way. ³When David*

and his men came to Ziklag, they found it destroyed by fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive.

Now look at their response in verse 4, *⁴So David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep.* I want you to pause just a moment and picture that scene. Even seen a real man cry? I mean really cry like what this verse says about David and his men? These men, bigger than life, so strong, so broken, in tears. That's the scene in Ziklag. They wept until they had nothing left. And it says then, continuing with verse 5, *⁵David's two wives had been captured—Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel. ⁶David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters.*

I want to ask you something and we talked about that this week in our study on Day Three (Pages 24-25), is there anything that causes us more bitterness in spirit than our sons and our daughters than something that has happened to hurt them. Is there anything that makes us more vulnerable? And makes us feel more like stoning someone or blaming someone than the ills that happen to our children? The injustices and the fears we have involving those children? And notice it says, *each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters*, and they all turned on David, scripture makes us understand. He had also lost his wives. His children had also been kidnapped. But needing someone to blame—someone upon whom to focus their distress—they chose him. He was their leader.

And it says then something very crucial to our spiritual health. Look at the rest of verse 6: *But David found strength in the LORD his God.* But David found strength in his isolation, in his complete aloneness, having absolutely no one—his wives had been captured, his children had been captured. All his men had turned from him. He turned to one place. The King James version puts it this way—and it's my favorite phrase in the King James version—*"but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God."* David encouraged himself.

As Beth Moore boldly stated this week, if there is anything we need to learn in order to get through the complexities of relationships, **it's HOW to find encouragement in the Lord ourselves**—how not to always need the encouragement of someone else, but to honestly be able in our isolation, in our aloneness, when no one else understands—and there are those times—to find encouragement only in the Lord.

In our study this week, we've seen all of David's relationship crash on the rocks. His men have turned on him. Saul had already turned on him. We've seen Saul kill himself. We've seen Jonathan killed. And David is basically left with no one BUT GOD! Now at that point, most of us would be just about ready to give up on relationships—but that's not the will of God.

Do you think David could identify a little with our young Alexander and his terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day? But, look at what David DID on his terrible, horrible day. Looking again at verse 6, we see clearly HOW he handled it. *Is that the way you handle your terrible, horrible, very bad days?* How do you encourage yourself when you are discouraged? Imagine you could master this skill—that you could consistently and predictably encourage yourself in the Lord, even when you were deeply discouraged. *What would you pay for that? What would that be worth to you?*

Although David was greatly distressed, he encouraged himself in the Lord. It's what we too need to do. Listen to these words from **PSALMS 34:17-18 (NLT)**: *¹⁷"The Lord hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles. ¹⁸The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed."*

Let's turn to the New Testament example of someone, the King of all Kings, who also found people in relationships to be fairly fickle. Yet, He also has revealed to us by example that relationships are one of the most important parts of our stay on Planet Earth. Christ absolutely prioritized the relationships he shared on this earth—they were in fact why He was here. As Beth Moore pointed out in

her video series of this study, we're going to spend a few minutes looking at some examples from the life of Christ at how He took part in FIVE DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIPS. And, by His example, we have to make sure that in our lives—for a sound spiritual health—that we can see directly how we are involved in these same groups.

Let's look at the life of Christ and the ways He handled relationships—healthy relationships according to the Scriptures. We'll look at five priority relationships. (HANDOUT DIAGRAM OF FIVE CIRCLES WITHIN EACH OTHER) I've given you a diagram from Beth Moore of how we will be able to see whether or not we're partaking in relationships of these kinds. We're also going to see that the circles of these relationships are going to get smaller and smaller. We'll start from the outside and move in and I pray that you will look at your own life and ask yourself if YOU are taking part in these same five priority relationships. We should see them reflected and should readjust to His example, if we're not.

Let's look at the first level of priority relationships. Turn to **MATTHEW 14:13-14 (NIV)** as we look at the life of Christ. First, we're going to see that Christ interacted in the widest scope of our diagram with the **MULTITUDE**: *¹³When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd (A MULTITUDE), he had compassion on them and healed their sick.* First, then, in the widest scope, we see that Christ spent time with the **MULTITUDE**. Now, we're going to see something else in each one of these and that is a **KEYWORD** in each one of these relationships.

So, on your diagram at the widest, most outside circle, we see this is the **MULTITUDE**. The keyword on this relationship is the word **WITNESS**. So, for our purposes today and our relationship with the multitude, what He has purposed most in this relationship is that we a witness—that we are an example to the power of Christ. In these verses, we see that Christ had compassion on them and He healed their sick. Now in healing their sick, he was also displaying

His mighty, awesome power so that He could bring them to a place of saving knowledge. God intends for you and me to be a witness in regard to the multitude for His power.

Turn to **ACTS 1:8 (NIV)** and let's look specifically at this power that He references for us: ***8But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*** Now look what He's saying. He says, I very much want you relate to the multitudes. He does not want our churches to become monasteries. He wants us to stay connected with the people out there in the lost world and not to pull away where they cannot see examples of the power of Christ. We have to keep in contact with a lost world—that's how we *"Go ye therefore..."* So, it's by our witness to the multitude that they will see His power and that He is alive.

Now, let's take it down to the next level of priority relationships and see this is a little smaller group. Turn to **LUKE 10:1 (NIV)** and listen to this: ***1After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.*** Look at that again. He appointed 72 and sent them 2 by 2 to every town and place where He was about to go. ***2He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.*** This is the 72—Christ interacted with the 72—and you're going to already see the keyword here in these verses that helped Him interest with this group. The keyword is **SERVICE**.

Now, today, you need to relate these 72 for our purposes to our New Testament body of believers. These were His followers. This was not the multitude. This was not the lost—these were people who were His followers. These today can be categorized as your present body of believers—the body of Christ—or the church. And the keyword is your body of believers is service. In fact, isn't that why He has us connected to the body? He tells us in **1 CORINTHIANS** that we are to remain connected to the body because all of us have been given different gifts, severally as He wills. If we're serving in the place and attending the church where

God has ordained for us to be a part, then we're going to bring the gifts that He needed for us to bring to that fellowship—just like fitting a puzzle piece into an open place of the puzzle. We bring the missing piece, or gift, to that body. It's for service that we are given the gifts of the spirit so that we can minister in the body of Christ, isn't it?

So, ask yourself if you are involved in the multitude or have you cut yourself off from the world? Are you allowing God to do His work through you by showing His witness and showing His power through you to a lost world? Then, ask if you are a part of the corporate body of believers? People tell me all the time that they really don't have to belong to a church to be a Christian—and that's true—but in order to be in the center of God's Will, we must.

Turn to **HEBREWS 10:24-25 (NIV)**. *²⁴And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. ²⁵Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.* Look at what he says here. Don't give up meeting together—stay connected to the body of Christ so you can encourage one another. Another reason that just as important as the encouragement is for safety. If you've ever spent much time watching National Geographic specials or Animal Planet, you've seen the great migrations of various kinds of herds.

In one, I saw where a wildebeest herd was migrating and hiding out in the surrounding area in the grass and brush were lions. If one of the wildebeest wandered off and separated itself from the herd, the lion pounced and attacked and killed the wildebeest. So, when we get out from under the umbrella of God's people and His authority, what we've done is we have gotten out from under a certain umbrella of His protection and when the lion is prowling around, looking to and fro throughout the whole earth, he's looking for just anyone whom he can devour. And he'll look for those straying from the flock.

Let's bring the circle in even tighter to the third group. Turn to **MATTHEW 20:17 (NIV)** and follow along as we read a part of this verse: *¹⁷Now as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples **aside**...* Now, stop right there. Notice that as Jesus was going to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside. He reserved to take some aside. Now, these are the twelve—the next group we see in the priority relationships that Christ shared. So, we see the twelve disciples. The word disciple in the original Greek means “*learner*” or “*pupil*.” Our keyword with this group is **discipleship**.

Picture these twelve—and it doesn't have to be 12, and probably will not be twelve—but do you have a small group in your church with whom you are being discipled? This is that kind of group and is really what we're involved in this morning in our Sunday School class. I've often said if I had to choose between Sunday School or the church worship service, I'd pick Sunday School because of the personal interactions of our group and the intense time of Bible study. I like the close group. Christ wants to grow us up in His Word and these twelve represent to us that group with whom we are discipled. This also is the small bible study groups we have in the church. Here we are pulled apart to be discipled in the Word—to be taught what to do with our spiritual gifts. Also, to be fueled so that we can go out and do what God has called us to do.

Now, let's move to the next and fourth level and you already know where we are going with this. Turn to **MATTHEW 26** and this will remain the text for which we will focus on the rest of the time today. Look first at **verses 36-38 (NIV)**: *³⁶Then Jesus went with his disciples (THIS IS THE TWELVE—THE GROUP OF PUPILS OR LEARNERS) to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled.* Our next group is the **three**. Christ interacted with the three that He took with Him. As you look at this passage, what is the keyword? It will be the same every time He takes the three. They got to go into the innermost places with the Savior, they got to see Him raise the dead and got to see Him in a more intimate situation than

any others. They got to see Him on the mountain of transfiguration—to drop in essence the cloak of humanity and stand before them in His glorious form. That was the three and our keyword is **TRANSPARENCY**.

Now, how does this relate to our lives? Why do we need a couple of people—and it's not going to necessarily be three, it might be two or four. Do you have a small group of people with whom you can be absolutely transparent—a group of people that know you completely? As we talked last week, this is my accountability group. A person who can call you on the carpet, as opposed to say those twelve and certainly those seventy-two, as part of the body of Christ and the multitudes. The larger group see one person while the inner circle—the three--sees the real you. They are allowed to come closer and know you. Do you have those, because we need those? Those are the ones that really know when we are hurting—the ones who really never have to ask on the telephone on how are you because they can tell from the time you say hello how you are. We have to have those—our accountability group.

There need to be people in our lives who know what our greatest temptations are—discreet people. People you can trust. But, be careful with the two or three who are closest to you—those with whom you can be transparent. You must use great caution right here, because they have the greatest influence on our life on this earth. Those couple of people have dramatic influence on our life. Make sure that this group has your same basic goals in mind—that they are pursuing godliness so that they can hold you accountable to that same thing. You need good friends who can tell you when you're messing up and heading for trouble and that they're going to stop you from doing something wrong—no matter what it takes. Someone to confront us—to speak the truth in love.

Then that brings us to the most important, the priority relationship of Christ and the one by example He tells us must be our priority. This is when we see the fact that David illustrated in just that small glimpse—something of Christ—and that if anyone knew how to

encourage himself in the Lord in times of complete isolation, times of complete aloneness, it was Christ Himself. Look now in the other part of our scripture as we look at the fifth priority relationship. **MATTHEW 26:38**, ³⁸*Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."* ³⁹*Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father,..* Stopping right there, we see that He has gone to a place of **just one**—that center, the core of our lives. That which should center us, the tightest relationship we should share should be with the One—Christ, God through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And the keyword would be **INTIMACY**. The intimate relationship that we share with God alone.

Listen to this, picking back up in verse 39, ³⁹*Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."* ⁴⁰*Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter.* ⁴¹*"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."* ⁴²*He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."* ⁴³*When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy.* ⁴⁴*So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.*

Think about what's taking place in that intimate place with the Father. Beth Moore in her video series calls that place **"the place of further still."** Think of that as it says, *going father*. He fell on His face before His Father. This place of further still—the place that God sometimes beckons us to go **all by ourselves**. These are not the moments that we might spend in our quiet time that are absolutely crucial to us—times of prayer, times of personal worship. No these are times of intensive care—when for a season God beckons us onward to be with Him all by ourselves and we have to enter that place, if we're going to be spiritually healthy. It's the place of further still.

This is a place where you go when you're overwhelmed. When you're absolutely overwhelmed and have nowhere else to turn, it's there. The word in the original Greek means to be "*surrounded with grief.*"

Have you ever been surrounded with grief? If you have, you know the moment I asked you that what it was, because being surrounded with grief is unforgettable. If you have to sit for a moment and reflect and wonder, then you've probably never experienced that. But we all will at some point in time—to where grief comes upon you like a heavy cloak. Overwhelming!

That place of further still, according to Beth Moore, is a place of honesty with God. Did you notice that Christ Himself, the Son of God, went to the place crawling further, and brought His absolute honesty to the Father. He was saying that if there's anyway you can let me out of this one, I want out of this one. I really want do. I really get some comfort here when I encounter those extreme times—based on what Christ asks first by example—that if you can let this pass, I really would like that. That can be our first option—using Christ's example. Remember, Paul himself tells us that he asked several times for his thorn in the flesh to be removed. You have biblical permission to first ask for your thorn to be removed. It's only after that that then you can come to a place if God says no of deciding how you're going to live with that in Christ.

But you can go to that place of further still and wrestle with the will of God. Tell Him how frightened you are to be in that place—how much you hate being called to that place and how you feels about that cloak of grief. It's a place where you wrestle with the will of God. It's also a place where your two or three **cannot go**. But they do have some responsibilities in that place—they are to remain close by and they are to pray. That's what the rest of Matthew 26 tells us. Notice that Jesus did not hash this out with God and the two or three. He had to do it alone—with the Father.

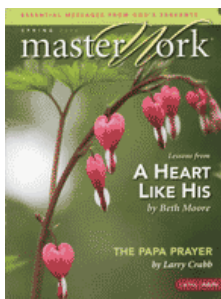
The two or three cannot help. Only God can work this out. If we allow the two or three to be there for answers, they can't cut it—

they will fail and we'll be angered. It has to be between you and God.

Next, notice that this is a place where the most serious matters in our lives are settled. Right there in the place of further still is where the most serious matters of our lives are settled. Notice He went in to that place saying, O Lord if it's possible, let this cup pass by me. But notice that as He continued in that place, He had to finally come to a place of **acceptance**. He could not come out of his time of intensive care to stay until He'd come to a place of acceptance. And that's the result of what God is trying to do in that place of further still. If we've lost a loved one or something has happened in our lives that has overtaken us with grief, and it's not going to be a situation we can change, then what's going to have to happen is we have to go into that place of further still, stay there, until the matter is settled and we've come to a place of acceptance.

When we finally arrive at that moment of acceptance, knowing there's nothing we can do to change it, we emerge **CHANGED**. We begin to see Him, know Him, and ask Him to show you His glory. So, when we have acceptance and the peace that surpasses all understanding like we read about in **Philippians 4:7**, we emerge a different person—changed by his glory.

Let's pray!



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