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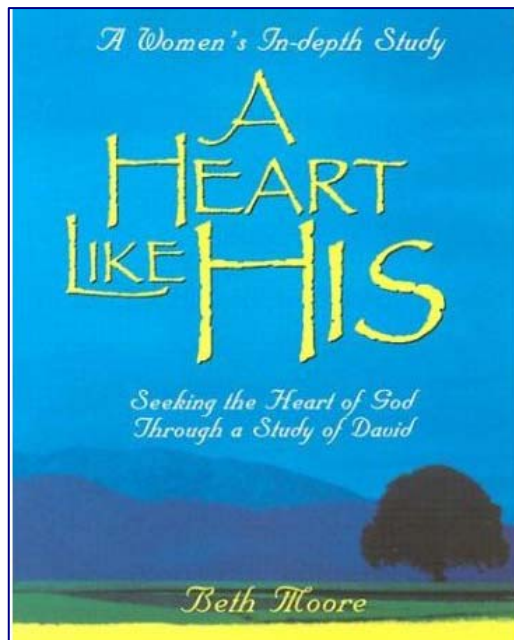
"DO-OVERS AND FINISHING STRONG!"

[FINAL YEARS & SETTLED FEARS: 1 KINGS 1 & 1 CHRONICLES 28]

WEEKLY SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

APRIL 20, 2008

LESSON #8 FROM THE **MASTER WORKS** SERIES STUDY OF:



"DO-OVERS AND FINISHING STRONG!"

[FINAL YEARS & SETTLED FEARS: 1 KINGS 1 & 1 CHRONICLES 28]

Wouldn't it be great if there were DO OVERS in life? A policeman stops you for speeding, you just tear up the ticket and say – "Thanks officer but I'll be taking a DO OVER." The bank says you bounced a check. "I'd like to have a DO OVER PLEASE." You call your wife by the NAME of the last GIRL you dated before you got MARRIED. "DO OVER!" FAIL a test, BLOW a presentation at work, INVEST in the wrong company, FORGET to send in your taxes – JUST take a DO OVER! There aren't many DO OVERS in this world, but when it comes to our RELATIONSHIP with God our Heavenly Father, DO OVERS are a reality. Do you believe that...no strings attached!

Have there been times in your life when you would like to get a DO-OVER? Me too! I wanted you to get this picture of DO-OVERS in your mind as we looked this week at the final years of David as we end our eight-week study from Beth Moore's *A Heart Like His*. But, let me explain since you may be like me and not truly understand what a DO-OVER really is. [Can someone define what a DO-OVER is to them?](#)

I always thought a do-over was if I could go back to a certain event or time and get another chance to do the right thing and then it would be as if the previous event never happened. Now, however, after spending time this week with Beth Moore and King David, I don't think that's it at all. Think with me a minute about a time you messed up and would like a *do-over*. OK, now, I assume similar events to that one have reoccurred in your life since that time, but you realized what you SHOULD do that time and were able to do it right. You didn't mess up—you didn't yield to the adversary and fall. You didn't sin! Beth Moore explains that second and third event when you DID NOT mess up as a do-over! God in His grace gives you opportunity after opportunity to see the error of your ways—and not to yield or sin. Listen to these words by Moses from **EXODUS 20:20 (NIV)**, *"...God has come to **test** you, so that the fear of God will be with you to*

keep you from sinning. Did you see that? God is going to test us over and over so that what? Yes, to “keep you from sinning.”

That’s what has happened in David’s life over the past eight weeks. Think about all we’ve see him come through. Whew! A shepherd boy who goes to check on his brothers and ends up a hero in battle by killing a 9-foot giant named Goliath. He was anointed king of Judah and then king over all of Israel. But along the way, during one of those tests, guess what? He messed up. He needed a do-over? And in our readings this week, we see David has learned how to do it. He has learned to go to God **first**. It’s a reminder of a former memory verse from **MATTHEW 6:33 (NKJV)**: *“³³But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

Like a lot of us, David seemed to almost be hiding from God during parts of his life—but thank goodness His father didn’t give up on him. The Bathsheba incident, the Uriah murder, the census of his troops when God was angry with Israel and for some reason so was David. Time and time—David just seemed to disappear and do what he wanted to do. Ever feel like that?

The boss of a big company needed to call one of his employees about an urgent problem with one of the main computers. He dialed the employee’s home telephone number and was greeted with a child’s whispered, “Hello?”

The boss asked, “Is your Daddy home?”

“Yes,” whispered the small voice.

“May I talk with him?” the man asked.

To the boss’ surprise, the small voice whispered, “No.”

The boss persisted, “Is your Mommy there?”

“Yes,” came the answer.

“May I talk with her?”

Again, the small voice whispered, “No.”

“Well, is there someone else there I might talk to?” the boss asked the child.

“Yes,” whispered the child, “a policeman.”

"Well then, may I speak with the policeman?"

"No," whispered the child "he is busy"

"Busy doing what?" asked the boss.

"Talking to Daddy and Mommy and the Fireman," came the whispered answer. Now the boss was growing concerned and just then he heard what sounded like a helicopter through the ear piece on the phone, the boss asked, "What is that noise?"

"A hello-copper," answered the whispering voice.

Alarmed, the boss nearly shouted: "What is going on there?"

In an awed whispering voice, the child answered, "The search team just landed the hello-copper!"

"Why are they there?"

There was a muffled giggle as the child said, "They are looking for me!"

They were "looking" for him.... Now, I've been a father long enough to suspect what might happen when that dad and mom finally found their little boy. BUT there can be no doubt about how much they valued him or of the love they had for him. In fact, if any one of my children disappeared, I would do whatever would be necessary to find them. That's exactly what God does with us. He doesn't give up. He keeps looking for us and wants to bring us back into His presence. It's all a big test. So, how are you doing so far?

Open your Bible to **1 KINGS 1:1 (NLT)** as we get a reminder of where we are in David's life: ***1**"King David was now very old, and no matter how many blankets covered him, he could not keep warm."* What does that tell us about David? He's old and frail as we have come to the final years of his life. These words of 1 Kings 1 are hard to read, especially after all we know and have come to love about David. His life is coming to an end. The one who had killed a lion and a bear and a giant. We learned from our study this week that David was not an extremely old man by the standard of his day—maybe in his 70s. Yet his life had been one mountaintop and valley after another. He probably led a life rarely free of extremity or anxiety. A life like that takes its toll—but don't forget that he met God at every venture.

Imagine you were old and felt you were going to die soon. You were still lucid and reasonably free from pain. The doctor has given you six months to live. You have your kids and grand kids gathered around for the last Christmas. What will you tell them?

As David was nearing the end of his life, weak and chilled, do you remember what was happening with his son, Adonijah? Look at **1 KINGS 1:5-6 (NLT)** and follow along as I read: *⁵About that time David's son Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith, began boasting, "I will make myself king." So he provided himself with chariots and charioteers and recruited fifty men to run in front of him. ⁶Now his father, King David, had never disciplined him at any time, even by asking, "Why are you doing that?" Adonijah had been born next after Absalom, and he was very handsome.*

Adonijah was the fourth son of David and he's seen here taking quick advantage of his father's failing health and followed in the footsteps of his deceased half-brother, Absalom. Adonijah declares himself king. He was the oldest surviving son. Joab and Abiathar the priest threw their support to Adonijah. That he would become the next king seemed a foregone conclusion, but he did not count of Bathsheba warning David about his plan. **If this was the end of your life, what would you be most grateful to God for?**

You will recall the rest of the story that after Bathsheba fills David in about Adonijah claiming the throne and naming himself king, and Nathan confirm it, David gets a "second wind." He recalls God's words that another son, Solomon, was to be the next king and would also be the one to build God's temple. Look at **1 KINGS 1:28-30** as we see what David does in response to this news: *²⁸King David responded, "Call Bathsheba!" So she came back in and stood before the king. ²⁹And the king repeated his vow: "As surely as the Lord lives, who has rescued me from every danger, ³⁰your son Solomon will be the next king and will sit on*

my throne this very day, just as I vowed to you before the Lord, the God of Israel."

This new found energy to follow up with God's plan by David was amazing. Realizing that he had more to do for God, he had enough life breathed back into his soul to finish the task. David rose from his bed and formulated a plan to place Solomon on the throne. Let's continue reading from **1 KINGS 1:32-35**: *³²Then King David ordered, "Call Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada." When they came into the king's presence, ³³the king said to them, "Take Solomon and my officials down to Gihon Spring. Solomon is to ride on my own mule. ³⁴There Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet are to anoint him king over Israel. Blow the ram's horn and shout, 'Long live King Solomon!' ³⁵Then escort him back here, and he will sit on my throne. He will succeed me as king, for I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah."*

Notice in these verses that David purposefully called three specific men to escort Solomon to his rightful place of authority. Nathan was the primary prophet of the day. Zadok was the priest, and Benaiah was a mighty warrior. For the nation to be strong, all four areas of authority needed to be present: prophet, priest, warrior and king. Interestingly, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will ultimately fill every one of those positions. All authority has been given to Christ!

After four years of service to Israel, David, old and perhaps stooped by the years, looked for the last time into the faces of his trusted followers. Finally, his son had been anointed and was king. His service was almost over. Let's pick up the story in **1 CHRONICLES 28:1-7 (NLT)**: *¹David summoned all the officials of Israel to Jerusalem—the leaders of the tribes, the commanders of the army divisions, the other generals and captains, the overseers of the royal property and livestock, the palace officials, the mighty men, and all the other brave warriors in the kingdom. ²David rose to his feet and said: "My brothers and my people! It was my desire to build a temple where the Ark of the Lord's*

Covenant, God's footstool, could rest permanently. I made the necessary preparations for building it, ³but God said to me, 'You must not build a temple to honor my name, for you are a warrior and have shed much blood.' ⁴"Yet the Lord, the God of Israel, has chosen me from among all my father's family to be king over Israel forever. For he has chosen the tribe of Judah to rule, and from among the families of Judah he chose my father's family. And from among my father's sons the Lord was pleased to make me king over all Israel. ⁵And from among my sons—for the Lord has given me many—he chose Solomon to succeed me on the throne of Israel and to rule over the Lord's kingdom. ⁶He said to me, 'Your son Solomon will build my Temple and its courtyards, for I have chosen him as my son, and I will be his father. ⁷And if he continues to obey my commands and regulations as he does now, I will make his kingdom last forever.'

Notice in verses 2-3 that David wanted to build the temple, but was not allowed to fulfill his life-long dream. **How do you think David feels about not being able to build the temple?** He lived and died a frustrated desire, because if there was one legacy David wanted to leave, it was to build the temple of God. Think about this for a moment. I believe that deep down in every one of us is a dream, a desire. When nobody is around and when we're able to be absolutely honest with ourselves before God, you and I entertain certain dreams, certain hopes. What is it that you want to have by the end of your days?

In spite of David's frustration, he faced this reality as a man after God's own heart would face it. What a remarkable man! He had this deep desire to build the temple, but the Lord's answer was no. **What was David's response?** Verse 3 clearly indicates that it was acceptance. He heard the Lord's "no" and he didn't resent it. Look at the rest of those verses we read. What is David doing here? He is focusing on what God **did** allow him to do. Is that the way you and I do when God doesn't give us our desires and our dreams? Or do we pine away over why?

I'm amazed at how David handles this. Let's continue with some more verses from **1 CHRONICLES 28, verse 9**. In an emotional moment, he looks at his son, Solomon, realizing that although David won't experience his dream, his son will. Verse 9: *"**And Solomon, my son, learn to know the God of your ancestors intimately. Worship and serve him with your whole heart and a willing mind. For the Lord sees every heart and knows every plan and thought...***

Notice the opening words David said to his son had to do with godliness. *"Solomon, know the Lord,"* David said. *"Know the God of your father."* That seems almost too obvious to mention, doesn't it? But you see, David was aware of the tyranny of the urgent. He had been king for four long and tumultuous decades. He knew that on that throne of Israel there was enough to keep a man so busy he would be tempted not to take time to know God. So David said, *"Solomon, above all the other things I want to pass on to you, **I want you to KNOW GOD.**"*

Looking back on his own life, and knowing what similar patterns might be repeated in his son's life, it's not surprising that David first told Solomon to *know God*. Above all else, get to know Him deeply ... intimately.

The second thing David said had to do with **SERVING GOD**. *"Solomon, serve the God of your father."* He doesn't stop there; he spells that out. Serve him with a whole heart and a willing mind. *"Solomon, don't make God force you to worship Him. Do it wholeheartedly. Do it willingly. Hold nothing back."* I think David could admonish Solomon to serve God *willingly* and *wholeheartedly* because he did it. Not perfectly, of course. In fact, he adds, *"for the Lord searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts."* Perhaps when he said that, David remembered that dark day, years before, when he stayed home from battle and fell into sin. He may have thought, *"Solomon, if there's any possible way, don't fall into my shoes there."*

The third thing he says to Solomon is, *“Seek the God of your father. Follow along again at the end of **verse 9 and 10**: **If you seek him, you will find him. But if you forsake him, he will reject you forever.** ¹⁰**So take this seriously. The Lord has chosen you to build a Temple as his sanctuary. Be strong, and do the work.**”*

Look at all of Verse 9 again. It reminds me of **Proverbs 3:6**, *“in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.”* [NIV] **So, what are some ways we can practically acknowledge God?** We also see Verse 9 speaking of serving God. **Let me ask if you would like our faith better if it didn't have a serving component?** [I USED TO THINK SO UNTIL I DISCOVERED THE JOY OF SERVING. I HAVE COME TO UNDERSTAND THERE IS NOTHING LIKE THE JOY OF SERVING GOD IN THE SWEET SPOT OF YOUR GIFTEDNESS.]

Verse 9 also speaks of seeking God. **What are some ways we can seek God? Is God hard to find? Is it difficult to stay close to God?** Let's look at a few scripture passages to refresh our memories: (1) **Proverbs 8:17 (NIV)**, *“I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me.”* (2) **Isaiah 55:6 (NIV)**, *Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near.* (3) **Jeremiah 29:13 (NIV)**, *You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.* **What happens if we forsake God?**

In the next section, verses 11 through 19, David talks about the construction of the temple and I love the way it unfolds. I can just see David as he pulled Solomon aside and said, *“Now look, Solomon, I've got all these plans laid out.”* Maybe he even unrolled some rough construction plans, and I can see them get down on their hands and knees together, Solomon on one side and David on the other. Look at verses **11-12**: ¹¹*Then David gave Solomon the plans for the Temple and its surroundings, including the entry room, the storerooms, the upstairs rooms, the inner rooms, and the inner sanctuary—which was the place of atonement.* ¹²*David also gave Solomon all the plans he had in*

mind for the courtyards of the Lord's Temple, the outside rooms, the treasuries, and the rooms for the gifts dedicated to the Lord.

David proceeds in great detail with the plans for God's temple—David's grand dream and since he couldn't build it, if basically was going to make sure if Solomon was to build it, he did it right! Can't you just hear him saying, *"Now look at how it's to be built, son?"* And he laid it out room by room. Doesn't that sound like a dad? *"Do it right, Solomon!"* What a model of diligence, alertness and keen perception David was. What a heritage for Solomon to build on.

I read an article this week that when the mythological Greek hero Odysseus went off to fight the Trojan War, he asked his close friend Mentor to care for his young son. It was a major responsibility, one that Mentor took very seriously. He served as the boy's constant companion, teaching him about life and personal responsibility. He was a good teacher and strong role model. To this day, in honor of this good man, we use this word mentor to describe a wise and faithful counselor. Each of us has mentors in life. I would not be where I am today or this morning without mine—the main one being my wife, Beverly. Every one of us is influenced by the inspiration of others. Isn't this exactly what we're seeing in David spending this time with his son? Telling him to know God and to serve Him.

David finally recognized that it's never too late to do it right—a do-over. Also, it's never too soon and we too must finish strong. I don't know if you remember this quote by former President Jimmy Carter who understood this principle: *"My faith demands—this is not optional—that I do whatever I can, wherever I can, whenever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try to make a difference."*

Although David couldn't build the Lord's temple, he had learned some hard lessons and wanted to impart those to his son, the new king. Since Solomon's primary calling and career was to rule the people and David knew only too well the problems Solomon

would encounter as a political ruler. Look at what he said about ruling the people in **1 CHRONICLES 1:20**: *Then David continued, "Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Don't be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. He will see to it that all the work related to the Temple of the Lord is finished correctly.*

"Don't be afraid, don't be dismayed. You're gonna have people on one side and you're gonna have people on another. You're gonna live like a pressure cooker." But, David says, *"You walk with God. He'll be right there with you all the way."* What great advice for us today too. When we get fearful or discouraged, just like what David warned Solomon about in verse 20, we are to remember that God is with us! Just that simple. Remember the verse in **ROMANS 8:31**, *"...If God is for us, who can be against us?"* The answer is nobody!

I know that we will never be men and women after God's own heart with half-hearted devotion. A heart wholly devoted to God is a heart like His. We started this study with a couple of underlying questions: Why was David a man after God's own heart? And how can I be a man or woman after God's own heart?

Let's pray.

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