

What kind of person are you?

Sermon by Pastor Diana J. Perkins

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Proverbs 20:11 says that even a child is known by his doings. True character shows up when there is no one around to view a person's actions. How many people want to be seen as kind and loving when that is not who they really are? Today I want to speak about King Saul versus David, a shepherd boy chosen by God to replace the king chosen by people.

The people of Israel demanded to have a king rather than a prophet to lead their people. Samuel tried to explain to them what take place if they insisted on having a king rule over them rather than a servant of God who brought God's word to them. They would not listen and finally God allowed them to choose a king. They were proud of Saul and at first he was a good leader. However, as time went by his true character began to come to the surface more and more until he overstepped his boundaries once too many times and God told Samuel that he was done dealing with Saul; he was going to replace him with a man after his own heart. In 1 Samuel chapter 15, we find the prophet Samuel rebuking King Saul for rejecting the word of the LORD. He told the king that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness as iniquity and idolatry. Because he had rejected the commandments of God, his kingdom was going to be cut short and his sons would not take his throne. King Saul remained in the palace for a period of time, but he began to be troubled by evil spirits for God had left him. In 1 Samuel 16:17, King Saul asked his servants to find a man who could play the harp and soothe his anxiety.

The servant told him that one of Jesse's sons from Bethlehem was a good choice. He was skilled with playing the harp; he was a mighty valiant man and a man of war. He was prudent in matters and a comely person. The LORD was with him. Jesse was approached and asked to allow David to appear before the king to play music for him and Jesse agreed. David found favor with the king.

Samuel mourned for King Saul for he knew that he was heading down a wrong path, but God asked him how long he was going to feel sorry for the king. He commanded him to go to Jesse's house and anoint a king from Jesse's sons that He had chosen to replace Saul. Samuel was concerned that Saul would kill him if he knew what he was going to do, but God told him to take a heifer to sacrifice with him and call people together to worship. When the townspeople saw the prophet enter their town they were troubled because they feared the LORD, but Samuel told them he had come in peace and he invited them to the sacrifice. Jesse and seven of his sons were there with him. The first one that Samuel saw was named Eliab. Samuel said, "Surely the LORD's anointed one is standing before me." The LORD told Samuel, "Don't look on a person's countenance or on the height of his stature, for I have refused him. For the LORD sees not as man sees for man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." God searches the hearts of men

and they cannot fool him. He checks our motives for the actions that we do. As the rest of the men walked by Samuel, one by one God refused them. Samuel said, "These have not been chosen by the LORD. Are these all your children, Jesse?"

Jesse said, "There remains one more, the youngest and behold his is tending the sheep." Jesse didn't consider David to be important enough to even invite to the sacrifice. He was the youngest and his responsibility was to tend to the sheep and he was not looked on for any value other than that.

However, God had a different view of this lad. Samuel said, "Send and fetch him for we will not sit down until he is present." David came from the field, tanned from the many hours of being in the fields tending to the sheep and he was a good looking young man. The LORD told Samuel to arise and anoint him for he was the chosen one to succeed Saul. So amidst his brothers, David was anointed and the spirit of God rested on him from that day forward.

The day came that the Philistines, the enemies of God, decided to attack the Israelites. They chose Goliath, a giant over 9 feet tall to be the leader. He was covered from head to toe with metal armor and he had a spear like a weaver's beam. His voice was boisterous and thundered over the place where Saul's army had gathered. He challenged the army of Israel to send a man to fight him and whoever won; their army would be the servants of the conqueror. He defied the armies of God and mocked the God of heaven.

Jesse's three oldest sons were present and nobody dared to accept the challenge. King Saul and his men were dismayed and afraid. For 40 days, Goliath taunted the army and there was no one courageous enough to meet the giant. David had returned home to his father's house and was tending sheep when his dad asked him to take food to his brothers and cheese to the captains of the army. He told David he wanted him to check on his brothers. David arose early in the morning, left his sheep in the care of a keeper and did as his father had asked. When he arrived at the battle, he left his carriage in the hands of the keeper of the carriage and ran into the army and saluted his brothers.

As he was talking to them, Goliath's voice rang out challenging the men to come to fight him. All the men fled and hid in their tents. Someone asked David, "Have you seen this man? He mocks us and the king will greatly reward any man who kills him." David asked what would be done for the man who accepted the challenge and killed Goliath to take away the reproach of Israel. He said, "How dare he defy the armies of the living God?" Eliab, his oldest brother heard him speaking to the soldier and approached him. He was angry at David and asked, "What brought you down here and with whom did you leave those few sheep with in the wilderness? I know your pride and the naughtiness of your heart for you came here just to see the battle." David asked, "What have I done wrong. Is there not a cause?" David spoke and said that he would fight the giant.

We can see why God overlooked Eliab for he was scornful of his younger brother and tried to make him feel inadequate and small. He didn't value David for who he really was in the sight of the servants of Saul and in the sight of God.

David went before the king and told him that he was willing to fight the giant. King Saul looked on him and told him that he was no match for this giant who was an expert in warfare and was covered from head to toe in metal and also had a person protecting him with a shield. That didn't change David's mind.

David began to tell the king of his credentials. He kept his father's sheep. When a lion and a bear took one of the lambs, David went after them and smote them and rescued the lamb from the beasts. When a lion tried to attack him, David caught him by the beard and slew him. He had killed both lions and bears when they tried to steal a lamb. This Philistine is no different than they were for he was defying the God of heaven. He said, "God delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear. He will deliver me out of the hand of the Philistine." King Saul said, "Go and the LORD go with you." King Saul offered David his armor, but David refused it saying that he had never proved that protection. Instead he took his staff and his slingshot, went down to a brook and chose 5 smooth stones, put them in his shepherd's bag and headed towards Goliath. Goliath was taken off guard and began to roar, "Am I a dog that you would send a lad to fight me? Why, I'll give your flesh to the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the field." David answered, "You come to me with a sword and a spear, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of host, the God of the armies of Israel whom you defied. This day the LORD will deliver you into my hands and I will smite you and your army and I will give you to the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. All the assembly shall know that the LORD doesn't save with a sword and spear for the battle is the LORDS and he will give you to us."

Goliath came near and David ran towards him. He put his hand into his bag, took out a stone and slung it at the giant. The stone sank deep into the forehead of Goliath and he fell to the ground. David had no sword, so he took Goliath's sword and cut off his head. The Philistine army fled and the army of Israel chased them and the battle was won for the LORD.

The years that David spent tending to the sheep, were years that he communicated with his God. He wrote the Psalms, practiced his harp, and worshipped God. He didn't think it beneath him to tend to the sheep for he loved and protected them. He practiced hitting the target with his sling shot and used it to protect the lambs from predators. The same God who delivered him from the lions and the bears saw his faith and delivered him from the giant, Goliath, who trusted in his own strength, power and might to fight God's servant.

Those who spend time with God in prayer, reading his word, fellowshiping with believers will be able to overcome Satan's schemes to destroy their souls. Read Ephesians 6:10-18