

# ***Disappointments***

(2 Samuel 7)

Disappointment visits all of us. Disappointment means “not as appointed.” Disappointments range from our picnics cancelled because of rain to our being laid off our jobs. With the increase in the unemployment from 9.6 to 9.8 in November, more people experienced this disappointment.

Disappointment is the lot of even the most dedicated believers. Elisabeth Elliot is the widow and biographer of missionary Jim Elliot who was martyred by the Auca Indians in Ecuador, South America. She went to Ecuador to reduce the language of an Ecuador tribe to writing so the Bible could be translated into their language. The only person who could or would help her was a Spanish-speaking Christian who lived with the tribe, but within a month he was shot dead. She struggled on with virtually no help for eight months more. Then she moved to another field, leaving her full file of linguistic material with her colleagues so that they could carry on where she had left off. Within two weeks she heard that the file had been stolen. No copy existed; all her work was wasted. That, humanly speaking, was the end of the story. She commented:

“I simply had to bow in the knowledge that God was his own interpreter. . . . We must allow God to do what he wants to do. And if you are thinking that you know the will of God for your life and you are anxious to do that, you are probably in for a very rude awakening because nobody knows the will of God for his entire life. . . .” (*Eternity*, January 1969, p. 18).

David the man after God’s own heart, like Elisabeth Elliot, experienced many disappointments.

**1. *The disappointment of the death of his son in 2 Samuel 18:33.*** A pastor friend of mine whose daughter recently died said: “Children are supposed to bury their children, not parents their children.”

**2. *The disappointment of friends in 2 Samuel 15:31.*** David’s friend Ahithophel betrayed him. In Psalm 41:9, David wrote of Ahithophel’s betrayal which is quoted by Christ in reference to Judas betrayal of Christ (John 13:18-21). Even Christ experienced this disappointment.

**3. *The disappointment of career in 2 Samuel 15:13.*** Not only is unemployment up but underemployment: Those who have lost hope of finding work or full-time work.

**4. *The disappointment of our decisions in 2 Samuel 12:13.*** David confessed his sins and did not blame others. Most of us are farsighted when it comes to the faults of others and

not just far sighted when it comes to our faults but nearly blind.

J. Dwight Pentecost in his book *God's Answers to Man's Problems* writes that there are two areas of disappointments. The first is disappointments because of circumstances and the second area of disappointment is with people. Pentecost writes a great line: "We live by a double standard. We expect of men what we do not hold ourselves responsible for; and if we committed the same failure that disappoints us in others, we would excuse ourselves. But because somebody else does it we hold them responsible and we're swept away by disappointment" (page 51).

**5. *The disappointment with God in 2 Samuel 7.*** David wanted to build God a majestic house and God would not permit him.

### **Every test tested positive that David was doing God's will**

#### **1. Circumstances were right in 2 Samuel 7:1**

A. The first word in this story "and" connects this scene to the previous scene of David returning the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. Now that the all important Ark of the Covenant is back why not build an appropriate dwelling place for the symbol of God's presence?

B. David had defeated all his enemies and now he could concentrate on building God a temple.

C. Circumstances sometimes dictate God's will. In the New Testament these circumstances are called "open doors" as in 1 Corinthians 16:9.

#### **2. Desires are godly in 2 Samuel 7:2-3.**

A. David is ashamed that his house is more elaborate than God's house. Haggai the prophet actually rebuked God's people for giving more attention to their houses than God's house in Haggai 1:4.

B. Sometimes God does lead us through God given desires (1 Timothy 3:1).

#### **3. Wise counsel from Godly men in 2 Samuel 7:3.**

A. Nathan here spoke before prayed. He does not make the same mistake in 12:1

B. Proverbs states that "in the multitude of counselors there is safety" (Proverbs).

#### **4. Others will do what David was not allowed in 2 Samuel 7:13.**

A. Solomon will be permitted to build God's temple.

B. I remember reading many years ago a tract entitled, "Others may but you may not."

What God permits for one believer may not be God's will for you.

**5. God said, "No!" in 2 Samuel 7:4-7.**

- A. Notice the author says, "The Word of the Lord came to Nathan."
- B. God's Word is the only infallible test for God's will.

**How Do I Respond to Disappointments? By NOT focusing on the disappointments!**

**1. Instead of Focusing on Disappointments Remember God's Past Blessing (2 Sam 7:8-9).**

A. God took David from a shepherd's pasture to the king's palace. Shepherds were poor, exposed to the harsh elements, tended smelly sheep, wore simple clothing, and were the bottom rung of society. Now David was rich surrounded by a plush palace, wearing kingly garments, and exalted to the highest position in the land.

B. If you think God is withholding something from you, remember all He has given you in salvation. David does this in Psalm 40:1-3.

**2. Instead of Focusing on Disappointments Consider what God is Going to do through you in the Future (2 Samuel 7:10-17).**

- A. David wanted to build God a material house or temple.
- B. God prophesied that He was going to build him a spiritual house or dynasty.
- C. David's greatest contribution would not be made in his life but after he was gone and "slept with his fathers" (7:12).
  - 1) In the future David's people would dwell in "a place" with safety (7:10).
  - 2) In the future David's descendants would build God a temple (7:13) for which David supplied the material (1 Chronicles 28:11-21).
  - 3) In the future David's people would have leaders from David's influence (7:16) when David is sleeping with his fathers.
- D. Instead of focusing on some disappointment in this life why not set your heart on what will outlast you in eternity, like helping the next generation accomplish more for the Lord than we will.

**3. Instead of Focusing on Disappointments Accept What God is Doing in you in the Present (2 Samuel 7:18-29).**

A. David now focuses on what is really important:

- 1) Not his material house but his spiritual legacy.
- 2) Our spiritual legacy is not what we leave behind but whom we leave behind.
- 3) If we do our job our next generation will accomplish more than we did (7:19)
  - a) Joshua not only succeeded Moses he exceeded Moses. Joshua was able to do

what

Moses could not or did not. Joshua lead God's people into the Promised Land.

- b) Elisha not only succeeded Elijah he exceeded Elijah. Elisha exceeded Elijah.

Elisha

had a double portion of God's spirit and performed twice as many miracles as

Elijah.

B. What is important is what will outlast us.

- 1) A good name (Ecc 7:1)
- 2) The unsaved we have led to the Lord (1 Thess 2:19)
- 3) Believers we have impacted to serve the Lord (2 Tim 2:2)
- 4) A generation of leaders ("house" in 7:23-29) whose impact will be eternal

John Maxwell wrote, "A leader's lasting value is measured by succession." Peter Drucker agreed, "There is no success without a Successor"

The Christian life is not 100 dash or the 100 metre sprint. The Christian life is more like a Relay Race. In a Relay race the baton has been handed to us and we must hand it to the next runner in the 20 yard space called the Exchange Zone. Coaches say the relay race is won by the cleanest and quickest exchange of batons in the Exchange Zone so the next runner can get that 10<sup>th</sup> of a second advantage over the next runner and win the race.

To whom will we hand the baton of Christianity at Gospel Baptist Church? Think of Gospel Baptist Church as the Exchange Zone. Are we preparing the next generation of leaders? To have a successful win in a Relay race you must have a runner with the baton and a runner who has been trained to take the baton finish the race.

I see AWANAs, Sunday school students and Children's Church as future runners who will feed into our Power Zone to whom we will eventually pass the baton of leadership.

Who will financially support this ministry in the near future?

Who will consistently be fed in our services to grow strong in the Lord?

Who will faithfully serve as teachers, deacons, ministry leaders, and even pastors?

Are we going to let a pebble of disappointment on the Relay Race to trip us up and cause us to abandon the race? Focus on the goal of preparing our successors.