

Sermon Title: When God Has Other Plans

Series: Seeking God's Kingdom, Part 39

Scripture: 2 Samuel 7

Main Takeaway: Seeking God's Kingdom means surrendering our plans to the King so that we can participate in what He's building.

Today's passage made me wonder...

How do we know if we're making a good decision or not?

I'm not even talking about major life decisions...

I'm just talking about in general.

For example...

On the evening of July 4th...

Amanda, Morgan and I were home, sitting at our kitchen table playing games.

Fireworks were going off all around us.

And I heard what sounded like sparklers...

But it sounded really close...

And the next thing I know...

Morgan says: *The oven's on fire!*

We were making cookies.

Thankfully the cookies were okay...

But the oven's done for.

So...

Do we buy a new oven...

Or do we wait?

Again...

How do we know if we're making a good decision or not?

What's our filter for making good decisions?

I can tell you that my thought process usually goes like this...

Does this make sense? Yep.

Is there any obvious reason I shouldn't do it? Nope.

Do the people I trust think it's a good idea? Yep.

Okay. Let's do it.

That's usually how I make decisions.

And most of the time...

That's probably fine...

But...

[SLIDE 1] What about those times when something we think is a good idea actually isn't what God has planned for us?

This is the situation that David finds himself in 2 Samuel 7.

He doesn't need a new oven...

But he's got a good idea...

And the prophet Nathan thinks it's a good idea...

But what if God had other plans?

So let's look at it...

[SLIDE 2] 2 Samuel 7:1-2 - After the king was settled in his palace and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent."

David's looking at his situation...

And something doesn't feel right.

He's living in luxury while the ark of God sits in a tent.

In fact...

[SLIDE 3] Archeological Site Picture

Here's a picture from when I visited the City of David archaeological site.

What you're looking at is this massive Stepped Stone Structure built into the hillside.

Some archaeologists believe this may have helped support David's palace, which would have stood farther up the hill.

Either way...

It gives you an idea of the kind of massive construction we're talking about.

David's palace was built with the finest Phoenician craftsmanship...

Complete with imported cedar and expensive stone...

I mean.. *nothing but the best stuff!*

Here's a reimagining of what it might have looked like...

[SLIDE 4] AI Generated Palace Image

And so...

David's looking at where he lives...

Then looks at where the ark of God is...

And something doesn't sit right with him.

David's house *dwarfed* the LORD's.

...at least that's what it seemed like to David.

And even without saying it...

The prophet Nathan could tell David had an idea...

So he pretty much says:

"Whatever you're thinking... Go for it!

The LORD's with you."

I could imagine David's thought process going something like this...

Does building the LORD a house make sense? Yep.

Is there any obvious reason not to? Nope.

Does the prophet Nathan think it's a good idea? Yep.

Alrighty then, let's do it.

[SLIDE 5] 2 Samuel 7:4 - But that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan...

Whenever you see a 'but' in the text...
Pay attention because what comes after it is important.

It's so important, that years ago...
One of my professors said he was thinking of writing a book called:
"The Biggest Buts of the Bible."

This one would probably make the list!

David had a great idea: the ark of the LORD needs a better 'house' (temple).
Nathan had his back.
But the LORD had something else in mind...

So the LORD said to Nathan...

[SLIDE 6] 2 Samuel 7:5-7 - "Go and tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"'"

The LORD is basically saying...
I never asked for a house...
And I don't need you to build Me one.

Again, it's not a bad idea...
David just wanted to honor God...
But God had other plans for David...

[SLIDE 7] 2 Samuel 7:8 - "Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel..."

David didn't get to the throne through his own strength.

[SLIDE 8] 2 Samuel 7:9 - “I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth...”

It’s interesting that David wanted to honor the LORD by building Him a house...
But instead...

The LORD planned to honor David...

And not just David, but ALL Israel.

The LORD’s setting up David’s kingdom so that His people can be...
(v10-11) planted, protected, and given rest.

[SLIDE 9] 2 Samuel 7:11b-12 - “The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom.

The “house” that the LORD’s talking about is David’s family line.

The LORD will build David’s kingdom...

And He’ll also raise someone up after David...

[SLIDE 10] 2 Samuel 7:13 - He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever...

So David won’t build a house for the LORD...

We know it’ll be his son, Solomon.

David will help with preparations...

But ultimately, it’s Solomon who builds the temple.

That makes me think of the worship song...

[SLIDE 10A] Days of Elijah...

Do you remember that one?

Do you remember when it says...

*“These are the days of Your servant, David...
Rebuilding the temple of praise.”*

That always confused me!
Because David didn't build the temple – Solomon did.

But apparently that's not what the song writer meant.

Rebuilding the temple of praise is talking about
the kind of worship we see in David...
A genuine love for the LORD...
And a desire to honor Him with his life.

And when I learned that...
I thought: *That fits really well with what's happening here.*

David's thinking about what **he can build for God.**
The LORD turns it around and starts talking about
what He's going to build through David.

Think about that...

[SLIDE 11] We naturally think about what we can build for God. But God's more concerned with what He's building in and through His people.

We talked about this last week...
The LORD is concerned about our heart.
That's a main theme that's going to continue throughout Israel's history.

And if you know anything about Israel's history after David...
It's far from perfect.
There are more kings that end up being wicked than faithful.
Verse 14 speaks to that...

[SLIDE 12] 2 Samuel 7:14 - I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands.

This actually gives me Jesus vibes...

Father... Son...

He's beaten and flogged...

He's nailed to a cross...

But Jesus never sinned.

So Jesus doesn't quite fit here.

Verse 14 is technically about Solomon...

But it's also about all the kings after him...

Including the kings who weren't exactly faithful to the LORD...

But despite their failures...

The LORD won't abandon His promise to David's family line...

[SLIDE 13] 2 Samuel 7:15-16 - But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever."

In other words...

Even though there will be kings in David's family who rebel against the LORD...

The LORD's covenant, loyal-love will never be taken away.

To be clear...

This is ***not*** saying the LORD takes His *affection* away...

"love" in verse 15 is the Hebrew word: *hesed*...

It's a loyal-love that's bound with a promise...

And that promise is that...

David's "house" – his family line – and his kingdom...

Will endure forever before the LORD.

And ultimately, it endures because David's family line goes all the way to **Jesus**.

That's why the angel said to Mary...

[SLIDE 13A] Luke 1:31-33 - You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

Jesus is the complete fulfillment of the LORD's promise to David!

But David couldn't see all of that yet.

He just wanted to build a house for the LORD...

It was a good idea...

But that night, the LORD said to Nathan...

[SLIDE 14] "I don't need David to build a house for me. Instead, I will build his house. His kingdom will last forever."

Notice that God didn't just veto David's plan...

Instead, **He revealed a much larger plan and invited David into it.**

So...

[SLIDE 15] 2 Samuel 7:17 - Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation.

This is an important little detail.

Nathan didn't leave anything out.

He didn't give the cliff notes version...

He gave *"all the words of this entire revelation."*

Let's see how David responded...

[SLIDE 16] 2 Samuel 7:18 - Then King David went in and sat before the LORD [I'm guessing that means David went to the tent where the ark was], and he said: "Who am I, Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?"

David understands what God was saying...

And he's humbled.

He admits...

“Who am I?”

It's almost like he's saying:

I was just a shepherd boy...

And now you've made me a king.

Who am I that You would do this for me?

And even though David's the king...

He knows he's ultimately under the authority of the LORD...

[SLIDE 17] 2 Samuel 7:20-21 - “What more can David say to you? For you know your servant, Sovereign LORD. For the sake of your word and according to your will, you have done this great thing and made it known to your servant.”

David is the servant...

Yahweh is the Master.

He's saying:

You are my King.

I belong to you.

I am your servant.

My plans are under Your authority.

And I love that David identifies himself as “your servant” to the LORD.

He actually refers to himself this way 10 times throughout the prayer.

I think about that in light of our own prayers.

When we pray...

I wonder if there's something to admitting *who we are* before the LORD?

Not because the LORD needs reminded...

But because sometimes we do.

So, our prayers can remind us of *who God is...*
And *who we are* in relationship to Him.

When we pray things like...

Jesus, You are my God and King...
I am Your child...
Your servant...

We're not being redundant...
We're agreeing with God about who He says we are.

And it's not weird to tell God who You believe He is...
David did that...

[SLIDE 18] 2 Samuel 7:22 - "How great you are, Sovereign LORD! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears."

David is saying:
LORD, there is no one like You.
No one even compares to You.
You are far above Your creation...
Far above the nations and their gods...
And far above me.

Again, it's not that God needs words of affirmation.
This is an expression of David's praise.
He's recognizing who God is in light of who he is.

And so here we have king David sitting before the true King...

The rest of his prayer shows that David trusts the LORD will do as He promised...

And I love that David says...

[SLIDE 19] 2 Samuel 7:25-26 - Do as you promised, so that your name will be great forever.

David's concern that the LORD will be honored started with an idea to build a house for the LORD...

That wasn't wrong...
It was a good desire!
Even Nathan was on board...

But the LORD had other plans...
Plans to make David's throne last forever...
So that the name of the LORD would be seen as 'great forever.'

And the beautiful thing about this is...
The LORD revealed to Nathan that He'd make David's name great (v9)...
But now David says:
Do as You promised, so that Your name will be great forever.

So David's not like:
YES! Finally everybody is going to know MY name!
Instead, he turns toward the greatness of God.

And so what we have here in chapter 7 is basically this...

[SLIDE 20] Recap
David wants to build the LORD a house...
But he's stopped...
Because the LORD has plans to build David's house...
And in that way, the LORD's name will be honored forever.

That's the gist of chapter 7.

And the whole time I studied the passage...
It made me think...

[SLIDE 21] What do we do with our good ideas when we don't have Nathan showing up later that night with a revelation from the LORD?

Like...

Sometimes the way forward isn't always as clear for us as it was for David.

This is where we can learn one more posture from David.

We've seen how his prayer started by recognizing who God is...

And who David is before the LORD...

And in this whole situation, I could hear David praying something like...

I belong to You...

My life is Yours...

My plans are Yours...

Teach me Your way, LORD.

David prayed like this in Psalm 86...

[SLIDE 22] Psalm 86:11 - Teach me your way, LORD, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.

David's prayers don't show us a 5-step program to figuring out God's secret plan.

But they do show us a posture...

You are great LORD...

You alone are God...

Your plans are greater than my own.

Teach me Your way.

Teach me to want what You want.

I don't know about you...

But personally...

If you were to ask me what I want...

I want to pay off my car loans...

I want to get a better camera for livestreaming...

I want more people to fill our pews on Sunday mornings...
 I want to be able to talk to *both* of my kids...
 And I want to serve Jesus by building up His Church...

All of those are good things.

**But even when we think we've got things figured out...
 Our plans still have to be surrendered to the King.**

Or to put it another way...

[SLIDE 23] The King determines what His Kingdom requires... not us.

**Our plans...
 Even our most reasonable, good plans...
 All remain under the authority of King Jesus.**

David just wanted to honor the LORD by building Him a house...
 He never could've imagined what God already had planned for him.

And another thing to notice is that David actually listened.
 He didn't just go and build a temple anyway.

So in that way...
 David surrendered his desire so that he could participate in what God desired.
 That ought to make us ask ourselves...

[SLIDE 24] Am I surrendered enough to allow the LORD to redirect my heart?

Are we willing to boldly pray:
*Jesus, teach me Your way...
 Shape my heart...
 Teach me to want what You want.*

Because no matter what happens in life...

May we be a people who continually seek His Kingdom...
Not our own.

Let's Pray