

Sermon Title: Who He Is. Who I Am. Who We Become.

Series: Seeking God's Kingdom, Part 41

Scripture: 2 Samuel 9

Main Takeaway: Seeking God's Kingdom means allowing the LORD's kindness toward us to shape how we see and treat others.

Earlier this week I was home alone...

And I decided to play the drums...

But honestly, I get tired of playing the same music.

So I have an app that literally just creates new songs...

I just tell it the kind of style I'm looking for...

And it does its thing in seconds.

I prefer to have it make music without lyrics...

But one song had a guy singing about breaking up with his girlfriend...

And aside from the subject matter...

It actually sounded pretty awesome!

Then I thought...

I wonder how good my app would do with Scripture?

And I gotta say, it did really well!

It was so good that I ended up making an entire album I called:

[SLIDE 1] David (album cover)

The album covers some defining moments from David's life...

Mostly sung from his perspective.

One of the songs is called: **Who Am I?**

—which sounds nothing like the *Casting Crowns* song.

So in the first verse, the song imagines David saying...

[SLIDE 2] Who Am I (2 Samuel 7) – Verse 1

*"I searched the room for something earned,
Some hidden worth beneath my name;
But every promise crossed the distance
Before I ever knew the way."*

In other words...

David is looking back over his life...
At everything the LORD has done for him...
And everything the LORD has promised him...

And he can't find anything in himself...
that explains why God has been so good to him.

He was just a shepherd boy...
And now he's king over Israel!

He didn't earn that!
The LORD chose him...

And David's response is simply...

[SLIDE 3] 2 Samuel 7:18 - Who am I, Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?

David was incredibly humbled by the goodness of the LORD.

But now he's the King...
And he's responsible to shepherd the LORD's people...

So how will David treat them?
Well, last week we saw that...

[SLIDE 4] 2 Samuel 8:15 - David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people.

"David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people."

And now, in chapter 9...

We see David actively looking for someone to show God's kindness to...

So we've got this progression...

[SLIDE 5] Chapters 7-9 Chart

Chapter 7 - David is overwhelmed by what God has done for him.

Chapter 8 - He does what is just and right for his people.

Chapter 9 - He's looking for someone to whom he can show God's kindness.

And as chapter 9 begins...

David wants to know whether anyone is still alive from Saul's family...

Someone he can show kindness to for Jonathan's sake.

This is where we're introduced to a man named Ziba.

Ziba was a servant in Saul's household...

But he wasn't necessarily an ordinary household worker.

He was probably some kind of important official...

He seems to know the affairs of Saul's family...

And he has 15 sons and 20 servants of his own.

So we don't know exactly what his position was...

But he was clearly a man with some standing.

And so David summoned Ziba and asked...

[SLIDE 6] 2 Samuel 9:3 - "Is there no one still alive from the house of Saul to whom I can show God's kindness [*hesed*]?"

David's not just talking about doing something nice.

Like... the last time we had a deep snow...

My neighbor down the street brought his snowblower over and let me borrow it.

That was really nice of him!

But the Hebrew word David uses here goes deeper.

It's the word *hesed*...

Hesed describes **loyal-love**.

So when we make a covenant or a promise to someone...
Hesed is the kind of love that moves us to honor that commitment.

David and Jonathan had that kind of commitment with each other...
They were like brothers...

And so years before David became the king...
Jonathan said to David...

[SLIDE 7] 1 Samuel 20:14-15 - But show me unfailing kindness like the LORD's kindness [*hesed*] as long as I live, so that I may not be killed, and do not ever cut off your kindness [*hesed*] from my family—not even when the LORD has cut off every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth.

And now David is king...
The LORD has given him victory over his enemies...
Just as Jonathan believed that would happen.

And now that Jonathan's gone...
David remembers his promise.

Out of his *hesed* for Jonathan...
He's wanting to show God's kindness to someone in Jonathan's family.

And as it turns out...
Jonathan had a son named **Mephibosheth**.

That name might sound familiar...
He was mentioned a few chapters ago...

[SLIDE 8] 2 Samuel 4:4 - Jonathan son of Saul had a son who was lame in both feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled, but as she hurried to leave, he fell and became disabled. His name was Mephibosheth.

That must have been a traumatic moment for Mephibosheth.

He was only five years old when Saul fought the Philistines for the last time...

In fact, I remember when we talked about this war...
We noticed how Saul's choices affected more than just himself...
His unfaithfulness affected the entire nation.

Including his young grandson.

Because when it was clear that the Israelites were losing...
Israelite families started fleeing from their homes.

And somewhere in the chaos...
As his nurse was trying to get him to safety...
Mephibosheth falls...
And becomes disabled in both feet.

His life was profoundly affected by circumstances he didn't choose.

Fast forward several years...
Mephibosheth's now a young adult...
Still lame in both feet.

But when Ziba tells David about him...
David sends for Mephibosheth...

And when Mephibosheth arrives in Jerusalem...
He bows down, honoring David...
But David said...

[SLIDE 9] 2 Samuel 9:7 - "Don't be afraid ... for I will surely show you kindness [hesed] for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table."

You might remember David had this same honor...
He ate at king Saul's table...
But that didn't last too long...
You can be sure that you're formally uninvited to dinner
when the host is throwing spears at you.

But now David's extending this honor to Mephibosheth...
 But it's going to be more than David's experience with Saul...
 Because he says: "*you will ALWAYS eat at my table.*"

This isn't a one time invitation.

David's extending a permanent place for Mephibosheth at the king's table.
 And he intends to keep his promise to Jonathan...
 By reflecting God's kindness to his son.

But look at how Mephibosheth responds...

[SLIDE 10] 2 Samuel 9:8 - Mephibosheth bowed down and said, "What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?"

In the ancient world, dogs were not man's best friend...
 Or household pets.

Dogs were seen as dirty scavengers.

So Mephibosheth's like...

Why would you, the king, send for someone insignificant like me?

It's very much like David's response to the LORD when he said...

[SLIDE 11] 2 Samuel 7:18 - "Who am I, Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?"

Both men were astonished by the *hesed* being given to them.

Think about that...

David looked at everything the LORD did for him...

And he wondered why God would show such kindness to someone like him.

And now Mephibosheth's looking at everything David is promising him...
 And wondering why in the world the king would show kindness to someone like him.

The thing to notice is that...

David knows what it's like to be on the receiving end of God's kindness...

And now he's extending that kindness to someone else.

And so...

[SLIDE 12] 2 Samuel 9:11 - Mephibosheth ate at David's table like one of the king's sons.

So Mephibosheth saw himself as a '**servant**' and a '**dead dog**'...
But David treated him like a **son**.

And David didn't just give Mephibosheth a place at his table...
He restored his grandfather's land...
He arranged for Ziba and his household to farm it...

That way **Mephibosheth and his family would always be taken care of.**

And so...

[SLIDE 13] 2 Samuel 9:13 - Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, because he always ate at the king's table; he was lame in both feet.

That last part is important.

David's kindness didn't reverse the accident that happened years ago...
But it did change his current circumstances.

It's as if he was adopted into David's family...
David knew what it was like to be welcomed into Saul's family...
Only then to be driven out.

So for Jonathan's sake, this would be different.
Jonathan's son would always be welcome as if he were David's own son.

And you know...

It's interesting...

When David came to conquer Jerusalem...

His enemies were confident he couldn't get in...

In fact, the text tells us there was a saying...

Because of how well protected Jerusalem was...

People would say: *The blind and lame will not enter the palace*¹

¹ 2 Samuel 5:8

But we know how that story went.
David went in and took over Jerusalem.

But now that David has his own palace in Jerusalem...
The imagery is striking...
He's inviting 'the lame' man to his palace table as a son.

So again...

[SLIDE 14] Mephibosheth comes before the king feeling like a 'dead dog,' but he leaves with a place at the table like a son.

Why?

Because David understood something about the kindness of the LORD.

He was allowing the LORD's kindness to shape the way he ruled.

David could have forgotten Jonathan.

He could've ignored Mephibosheth.

He could've been just... sitting back and relaxing in his new palace...

But he didn't.

He remembered his covenant...

And instead of slouching and couching...

He used the authority God gave him to bless someone else.

He used his God-given authority to do what was just and right for his people.

But there's a little detail that I sort of glossed over earlier...

David was also *searching* for someone to bless.

[SLIDE 15] 2 Samuel 9:1 - David asked, "Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness [*hesed*] for Jonathan's sake?"

Ziba says, *Yeah! Jonathan has a son.*

And David said, *Where is he?*

The fact that David was blessed by the LORD...

Then he was actively seeking someone that he could bless...

It makes me wonder...

[SLIDE 16] Am I actively looking for opportunities to bless the people the LORD has placed in my life?

And it's interesting...

The LORD blessed David...

There's no way David could repay the LORD.

Then David blessed Mephibosheth...

And there's no way Mephibosheth could pay David back.

What about us?

Jesus blessed us in a way that we could never pay Him back...

That's the gospel.

Without Jesus, we're slaves to sin and death.

And we're without the promise of eternal life with Him.

Scripture says that while we were still sinners...

Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

Not only that...

He invites us to His table.

He prepares a place for us in His house.

He even calls us His child.

That's how Jesus showed His faithful, loyal-love (*hesed*) toward us...

And now He calls us to show His *hesed* toward others...

But sometimes...

The way we see people gets in the way of how we love them.

Especially if we see someone as an enemy.

I was reading a BIC article recently, written by Chad Frey...
He's the president and CEO of the Neighboring Academy...
Which is a program that breaks the cycles of poverty by creating a pathway to homeownership.

His work and calling is very much about loving his neighbor
in the Harrisburg area.

In his article, he said...

[SLIDE 17] "I actually think it's impossible to love my enemy if I see them as an enemy. To take any sincere steps toward putting this teaching into practice requires that I transform the way I understand others—not as my enemy, but as my neighbor."²

Each of us has immeasurable worth in the eyes of God.

We're all created in the image of God.

So how should that change the way we see and treat others?

Our text today said two different times that Mephibosheth was lame in both feet.

Mephibosheth even called himself a 'dead dog'.

But David looked at Mephibosheth through the lens of the LORD.

And rather than forgetting about him...

David saw and treated Mephibosheth like a son.

And so what we're seeing is that...

[SLIDE 18] Seeking God's Kingdom means allowing the LORD's kindness toward us to shape how we see and treat others.

So who has the LORD put in our lives that we could bless?

And what would it look like to show them the kindness
we've received from Jesus?

And so...

² <https://bicus.org/content/uploads/2026/09/shalom-summer2026.pdf>

As we close our service today...

We're going to worship with a song that reminds us of who Jesus says we are.

May His kindness toward us shape the way we love Him...

And love others.

Let's Pray