

“David, a man after God’s heart”

God takes our messes and turns them into masterpieces

2 Corinthians 12:9 ESV

As adults, we should look at Humpty Dumpty with different eyes, not just as the cute children’s tale, but as an illustration of life’s condition - the *human* condition for most of us. A broken jar - cracked but put back together - lets the light inside come through the cracks. God doesn’t call the qualified - he qualifies the called. Lots of times we get the cart before the horse, thinking we have to get our act together before we can do anything for God - much less to show up at a church building and walk in lest the roof cave in on us.

There are people who live with this fear because they think that all of their history is on display for everyone to see, but the only one who really sees it is themselves - or maybe people who were impacted and affected by it. God doesn’t see that history anymore. He has removed our iniquities as far as the east is from the west. When we gave our lives to Jesus and became his followers, we gave him our *present* condition, and our *past* condition.

If we listen to other people’s stories, we bring the Spirit of God into that place, and the atmosphere is changed. We carry within us the capacity to walk into a room and literally *shift* the atmosphere - for good or for worse. It’s really up to us - it’s our choice as to how we impact the *ethos* - the atmosphere where we are. God can be present in every conversation we have, even with the “*nones*” (those who check the *none* box for their religious preference). If they’re honest, they’ll say they want to come back to God, but they feel like they’re a long way from him. In reality, he’s only as far as them just turning around. God has never left or forsaken them - he’s *right there*. They may think they left God, but he never left *them*. They need only turn around (called repentance). Anyone can do that *right now*.

There’s a real need for us to walk into an environment where Mr. or Mrs. Dumpty are, and carry with us freedom, healing, and grace - not because *we’re perfect*, but because we’re not perfect yet. We’re all cracked vessels, but God is healing us. We are, both, *healed* and *being* healed at the same time - both, *saved* and *being saved* at the same time - both, *free* and *being set free* at the same time. We *are* and we’re *in process* at the same time.

When we ask people questions about their lives, they will, amazingly, open up and tell their story if we'll let them. Some of us have felt like we're *too* cracked - *too* broken - *too* leaky - to be filled and to be used. But, the leaks we have in our buckets - our lives - the cracks by which we think all of God's goodness, grace, and mercy is coming through and leaking out - that's actually the *truth*. He is filling us up - we are leaking out, and those *cracks* are actually what qualifies us to make a difference in someone else's life.

If we're so squeaky clean - or *say* we are - no one else will feel like they can even approach us. We'll just cause them to feel dirty around us because we're so "perfect". We don't have to present ourselves as having it all together, because we're all in this together - there is no higher or lower rank - no caste system - because the Kingdom doesn't have a caste system. To do that would be violating the very heart of Jesus.

God doesn't call the qualified - he qualifies the called

He has qualified each one of us - because he's *called* us. He didn't call us because we were qualified. If that was the case, *none* of us would ever be called.

2 Corinthians 12:9 ESV

"But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient [more than enough - never runs out] for you, for my power is made perfect [complete, whole, fulfilled, total - not perfection] in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

There will always be enough grace for us. It's not in a container that can just run out - it's perpetual. Paul bragged about his weakness, not to wallow in it with others, but to let them know that there's *hope* for them through God's strength working in their weakness - something bigger than they are. God then turns our mess into a message - our test into a testimony - our mess into a masterpiece - and then he wants us to become a trophy of grace. A trophy, by design, is meant to be displayed for everyone to see.

So, we then take our scars - the broken and cracked vessel of who we are - into the world for people to see, along with the light of Christ that's within us, shining out through those cracks - the Life of the Holy Spirit in us that's leaking out through the breaks, cracks, and holes in our buckets and vessels. That's the beauty of what Jesus *has done* and *is doing* in us.

As we look at King David in the Bible who is seen by many as a great hero of the faith, Scripture says he was also a very flawed individual. This series isn't about bringing people down, it's about recognizing their humanity - they are divinely human - as we are. There are moments where we *shine* with the divine, but also moments where we *reek* with humanity - *and that can change in a nano-second*.

David didn't start out as a king, but as a boy who was the youngest son among many brothers. As the youngest, he ended up out in the field tending his father's sheep, while the other brothers were doing the more glorious and glamorous jobs. But, being a shepherd was no light-weight job on a green hillside playing the Sound of Music on his harp. There were predators out there, and David had to learn to be a man of war by tending and guarding and the sheep from those predators. That could be brutal and ugly to prevent damage or harm from coming to the flock. David learned how to fight. He killed a lion and a bear with his own hands.

Some time later David was called up near the front lines of a battle between the Israelites and Philistines. As a giant named Goliath stood on the field between the two armies taunting the Israelite soldiers, David was emboldened by God to go out alone and oppose Goliath, armed with only a sling and five smooth stones. After killing the giant, David would later replace Saul as king over the nation and armies of Israel. He was God's anointed man but he was also a man of flesh.

One day, when David should have been out with his armies in battle, he was, instead, at home on the rooftop. Then, someone caught his attention - her name was Bathsheba, and she was beautiful. David couldn't take his eyes off of her, and he began to obsess over her. He found out who she was and that her husband was Uriah the Hittite, a warrior in David's own army.

David wasn't leading the war where he was supposed to be, but was home alone, bored - and dangerous. He got caught up in lust. He sent to have Bathsheba brought back to him and then slept with her. He had committed adultery with the wife of one of his own soldiers, and then panicked when he realized what he'd done, and that Bathsheba was now pregnant. David planned to cover up his sin by bringing Uriah home from the battlefield in order for him to sleep with his wife, but Uriah refused, choosing instead to sleep out on the ground, since his fellow soldiers were still out risking their lives in battle.

After David's first attempt at a cover-up had failed, he became desperate and plotted to have Uriah killed on the battlefield. The rock star, King David, after setting up Uriah's murder, then brought Bathsheba into his home as his own wife. One sin begat another and another, and then came Nathan the prophet to see David. He told him a story about a rich man who owned many flocks and herds, and about a poor man with nothing but one little ewe lamb that he treated like one of his own children.

When a traveller visited the rich man, instead of feeding him from his own flock, he instead slaughtered the poor man's precious and only lamb. As David became furious, hearing what the rich man did, Nathan quickly told him, "You are that man!" David could hide from a lot of people, but he couldn't hide from God. Then David made his first good move after many bad ones, and he repented - he turned and confessed what he did, crying out to God.

A man after God's own heart

1 Samuel 13:14 NLT

"But now your kingdom must end, for the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart. The LORD has already appointed him to be the leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command."

Acts 13:22 NLT

"But God removed Saul and replaced him with David, a man about whom God said, 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart. He will do everything I want him to do.'"

One of the greatest compliments given in Scripture was repeated in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. It referred to David as "*a man after God's own heart.*" David, who had covered up adultery with murder, and then stole the precious wife of another man to be his own, had the same hope we have now. Our sin is not less on the scale in God's eyes - we have all broken relationship with him by making ourselves gods - the very essence of sin.

Our one response should be exactly what David's was - to repent. The heart of this message is to be quick to repent. We're all probably going to blow it again somewhere down the line. Our responsibility before a loving God is to admit what we did and to quickly repent.

*That's why David was called a man after God's own heart - he confessed - he turned - he repented. He later suffered a lot of natural and logical consequences - that happens in this world. What we set in motion, God allows to play out in its natural course - he's not doing it to us, but it's the consequences of things that we, ourselves set in motion - *God's not punishing us*. We need to be people after God's own heart, and turn and repent *quickly* - to grab hold of God and not let go.*

Thank God and confess, *"I have a problem. I need help. I need You!"* - be quick to repent. If you've been carrying it for more than three seconds, then you're way past due. Simply repent. In essence, that means to turn and go the other way - *towards God* - *not* just saying you're sorry to him, but changing your mind about sin, and seeing it the way God does. Acknowledge it was sin and then also acknowledge that God has completely eradicated it away from you as far as the east is from the west.

God doesn't need you beating yourself up with a flog because you made a mistake. Be quick to repent. Turn. Go to him. Agree with him about what it is - and then *let it go. Forgive yourself*. It's not just about grace for everybody else... *it all begins with grace for yourself.*

Prayer

Lord Jesus, we are all trophies of Your grace - messes becoming masterpieces. Our testimonies are being built, even as we live this life. Let our stories be told, to help countless people through years and even generations to be changed and transformed. But, Father some of us are stuck, because we simply need to repent, turn, and agree with You - to change our minds and be transformed, by seeing it like You see it.

Some of us feel unworthy to serve You - or to do anything - even to worship or sing. We can't find joy in it because of guilt and shame - condemnation from the weight of it all. Today, by faith, we off-load anything we're carrying. Give us grace to quickly repent - not to beat ourselves up, but to repent and release - to come as we are.

Thank You for David's heart. In the midst of a lot of mess-ups, the one thing he did right was to run back to You quickly. He repented quickly. Thank You for that lesson. His greatness was not in his leadership, but in his repentance - in his heart.

Father, give us Your grace to take our leaky full buckets and go out from here leaking Life everywhere we go. We love You and honor You. In Jesus' name. Amen