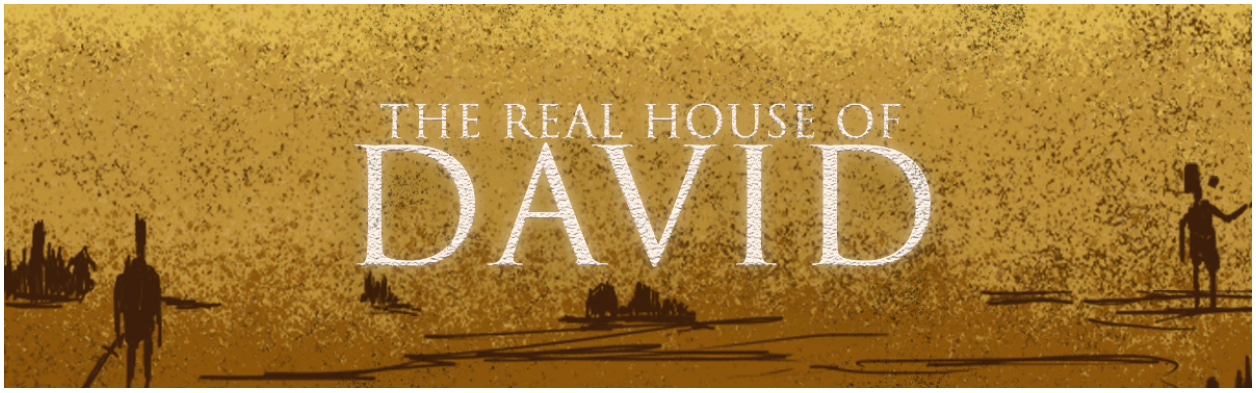


TAKE THE HIGH ROAD

1 Samuel 24:1-22

- ***When have I ever wanted to get revenge for some hurt I experienced in my life?***
- **There are three certain things in life – death, taxes and hurts.**
- *"Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."* (2 Timothy 3:12)
- **Sometimes people try to hurt us because they are influenced by: 1) Satan (John 10:10a), 2) their sin nature (Romans 7:19-20, James 4:1), or 3) society (Romans 12:2, James 1:27b).**
- **Hurtful people cause us to deal with difficult emotions and situations.**
- **David was a successful man who experienced hurts from others (1 Samuel 18-26); and his struggles with King Saul remind us that we must prepare ourselves to "take the high road" as we deal with hurts and hurtful people.**

Taking The High Road With Difficult People Involves:

RESISTING <u>PAYBACK</u> (1 Samuel 24:1-4)

- *"Saul went into a cave to relieve himself. But as it happened, David and his men were hiding farther back in that very cave! 'Now's your opportunity!' David's men whispered to him. 'Today the LORD is telling you, 'I will certainly put your enemy into your power, to do with as you wish.'"* (1 Samuel 24:3-4)
- **All opportunities that we have are not from the Lord.**
- **Jesus taught that when we have opportunities to harm our enemies, we are instead to love them and be good to them (Matthew 5:43-48).**
- Jesus - *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.'"* (Matthew 5:43-44).

- **When people harm us we can respond in: 1) human ("evil for evil and good for good"), 2) hellish ("evil for good") or 3) heavenly ("good for evil") ways.**
- **We must be willing to do things God's way when opportunities arise for us to avenge ourselves in some way.**

Taking The High Road With Difficult People Involves:

DEMONSTRATING <u>HUMILITY</u> (1 Samuel 24:5-8)

- *"So David crept forward and cut off a piece of the hem of Saul's robe. But then David's conscience began bothering him because he had cut Saul's robe."* (1 Samuel 24:4-5)
- **When little indiscretions bother us – it is a sign that we are humble and are in a place where God can use us.**
- *"He said to his men, 'I swear before the Lord: I would never do such a thing to my lord, the Lord's anointed. I will never lift my hand against him, since he is the Lord's anointed.' With these words David persuaded his men, and he did not let them rise up against Saul. . . . After that, David got up, went out of the cave, and called to Saul, 'My lord the king!' When Saul looked behind him, David bowed to the ground in homage."* (1 Samuel 24:6-8)
- **We often seek to avenge ourselves because our pride has been hurt.**
- **God resists those who are proud, but gives grace to those who are humble (James 4:6-10, 1 Peter 5:5-7).**
- *"Do not touch my anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm."* (Psalm 105:15)
- **When we are humble, we will treat those in authority over us with respect, even when their words or actions have harmed us (Psalm 104:14-15).**

Taking The High Road With Difficult People Involves:

RESPONDING IN <u>GODLY</u> <u>WAYS</u> (1 Samuel 24:9-15)

- *"Then he shouted to Saul, 'Why do you listen to the people who say I am trying to harm you? This very day you can see with your own eyes it isn't true. For the Lord placed you at my mercy back there in the cave. Some of my men told me to kill you, but I spared you. . . . Look, my father, at what I have in my hand. It is a piece of the hem of your robe! I cut it off, but I didn't kill you. This proves that I am not trying to harm you and that I have not sinned against you, even though you have been hunting for me to kill me."* (1 Samuel 24:9-11)
- **If we are going to overcome problems with difficult people, we must want reconciliation (if at all possible) and not revenge (Romans 12:18).**
- **If we want reconciliation with people who have hurt us we will: 1) address the issue in a Biblical way (Matthew 15:15-17), 2) get to the "truth" of what happened and the heart of the disagreement or wrongful action, and 3) trust the Lord to "make right what is wrong" (Genesis 50:20, Romans 8:28).**

- *"Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. Do your part to live in peace with everyone, as much as possible. . . . Never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God. . . 'If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink, and they will be ashamed of what they have done to you.' Don't let evil get the best of you, but conquer evil by doing good!"* (Romans 12:17-21)
- **When things happen and people get hurt, we are to respond "the heavenly way" instead of the "human or hellish way."**

Taking The High Road With Difficult People Involves:

LIVING WITH <u>INTEGRITY</u> (1 Samuel 24:16-22)

- **People with integrity *do what the Lord wants them to do.***
    - *"When David had finished speaking, Saul called back, 'Is that really you, my son David?' Then he began to cry. And he said to David, 'You are a better man than I am, for you have repaid me good for evil. Yes, you have been amazingly kind to me today . . . Who else would let his enemy get away when he had him in his power? May the LORD reward you well for the kindness you have shown me today."* (1 Samuel 24:16-19)
- **People with integrity *do what they say they are going to do.***
    - *"I (Saul) realize that you are surely going to be king, and that the kingdom of Israel will flourish under your rule. Now swear to me by the LORD that when that happens you will not kill my family and destroy my line of descendants!' So David promised this to Saul with an oath."* (1 Samuel 24:20-22)

- **When others hurt us: 1) we shouldn't be surprised, 2) we shouldn't become bitter or resentful, and 3) we shouldn't try to play God by being revengeful.**
- **The Lord will avenge us and reward us when we focus on "conquering evil by doing good." (Romans 12:17-21).**
- Jesus – *"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven…"* (Matthew 5:10-12)
- **Our refuge when dealing with difficult people or situations is not in a place, pleasure or in a position, but in the Lord (Psalm 142:1-5).**