

“Who Gives and Who Receives?” // 2

Samuel 7 // *The Life of David* #13¹

Introduction

Adon reads: **2 Samuel 7:1**, Now when the king lived in his house and the Lord had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, 2 he said to Nathan the prophet, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent.” 3 So, Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that is in your heart, for the Lord is with you.”

4 But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, 5 “Go and tell my servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord: Would you build me a house to dwell in? 6 I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. 7 In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?””

8 ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. 9 And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all

¹ Works Consulted: Tim Chester, *1 Samuel For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading (God’s Word for You)*, The Good Book Company, September 15, 2014; John Sailhammer. *NIV Compact Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994); Jen Wilkin, JT English, Kyle Worley, Jamin Roller, “[An Ark and a Covenant](#),” a podcast posed by The Village Church (Flower Mount), April 1, 2018; Beth Moore, “The Long-Awaited Throne,” session taught with LifeWay, published in 2010; Timothy Keller, “[The Promise of David](#),” sermon was preached at Redeemer Presbyterian Church on December 14, 2003; Andy Stanley, “An Unexpected Christmas, Part 4: Promise Keeper.” And others as noted throughout.

your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name... 10 And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more... And I will give you rest from all your enemies.

Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. 12 When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, 15 but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. 16 And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.”

18 Then King David went in and **SAT** before the Lord and said, “Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? 20 And what more can David say to you? 21 Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have brought about all this greatness, to make your servant **KNOW** it.

Adon: Today’s message has only one point: The Christian life is not about what we do for God, but what he does for us. David starts this chapter trying to go and do. It ends with God commanding him to sit and know.

I’ve been telling my dad his sermons have too many points and are hard to follow. So, today’s message has only that one point.

Let’s pray...

PRAYER: open our eyes so we can sit in wonder with David. Speak to us in the 21DOPF.

(You might remember that Avi, Curtis' cute little daughter, read the passage before her daddy preached a couple of weeks ago--and that was adorable, of course... Well, as I was going through this passage I was really struck by Nathan's words, "You won't accomplish this, but God will do all this through one of your sons..." and I thought it may be appropriate to have another one of our Summit students, this time my son, read our passage--just as a reminder how God promises to bless OUR children, too. Our kids and student ministries are probably our most important ministries here, and I hope--if you have kids--you have them involved.)

2 Samuel 7: Several years ago we had a church member that worked at "Ancestry.com" and one day she came up and handed me a big folder with my name on it and said, "Here's a little history of your family in America. I was a little bored at work and got curious about the spelling of your last name, 'Greear,' because it seems to have that extra vowel in it (G-r-e-e-a-r--*whether you know how to spell my last name is always a sign of whether you actually know me or not*), so, she said I did a little research, and turns out the extra 'a' was not used by the original Greers that came to America." She pulled out a shipping passenger manifest and said, "Your first Greer ancestor to come to America was Shadrach Greer, who came over from Scotland in 1730-something. (Shadrach Greer. That's got a nice ring to it, doesn't it? You pregnant couples are free to use that for your newborn--personally, I think it works for a boy OR a girl). Anyway, she pointed to the ship manifest and sure enough, there it was, Shadrach Greer, Greer spelled G-r-e-e-r, no extra "a." "That spelling of Greer,

with no 'a,'" she said, "stayed the same until we get to the mid-19th century, when unexplainably it changes to 'G-r-e-e-a-r,' which" she said, "is almost always a sign that someone was trying to avoid the law--they wanted to keep their last name but avoid being tracked by the government." I said, "So, you're telling me..." and she said, "Yes, I'm telling you that one of your ancestors was some kind of criminal--at least a tax evader." **And here I am as your pastor. Look how far the Greears have come.**

Well, I'm not sure what that means about me, but I do know that for many of us, **understanding who our ancestors are** helps us better **understand who we are.**

I share that because **Jesus' most frequent title in the Gospels is "Son of David"**--the Gospel writer Matthew uses this title for Jesus 10x in his Gospel alone. The point being--to understand Jesus, you have to understand David, and this passage makes the **Jesus-David connection clearer than any other.**

As chapter 7 opens, *David* has established himself as King; he's subdued his enemies, he's at rest & the people are prospering.

The prophet *Nathan*, who basically serves as the nation's pastor, is sitting with David **out on David's back porch**--I picture them with a couple of decaf coffees, maybe smoking a pipe--that's not in the text but that's how I see it--and David's eyes fall to the **tabernacle** located not far from his palace. It was looking pretty shabby. The tabernacle was basically a giant tent that housed the Ark of the Covenant. God had given Israel instructions for how to construct it right after they left Egypt in the Exodus, so by this point it would have been several hundred years old, and I assume it showed significant signs of wear.

And here's David in a big old palace with rooms and hallways and marble and balconies, and a helicopter pad...

So, David says to Nathan, vs. 2, "You know, this isn't right. God lives in this shabby old tent and I live in a big old house that smells like cedar." (Cedar wood--btw, was considered top-of-the-line luxury in those days, and if you've ever priced adding a cedar-lined closet to your house you know it's still considered a luxury). David's got a whole house made of cedar, so David says: "This ain't right. I'm up in First Class, and God's flying coach. It's time to upgrade God's digs."

Nathan responds like any pastor does when a wealthy person indicates they want to make a large donation to the Kingdom of God. You say vs. 3, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you." (Will that be cash, check, or stock transferral, David?)

That night, however, the word of the Lord came to Nathan in a dream, and the Lord told Nathan, "Say to David, 'I appreciate the sentiment, but have I asked you for this? In all those years when I was rescuing Israel, & leading her, & providing for her, did I ever ask any of them to build ME a house? Have I ever asked you to do this for me?'"

On the contrary, David... [8] "I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. (David, do you remember where you were when I found you?) [9] And I have been with you wherever you went and I have cut off all your enemies from before you.

And I will make for you a great name... [10] And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and I will plant them... [11]... And I will give you rest from all your enemies. And the Lord... will make you a house.

Who is giving to whom? God is giving to David, not vice versa.

Hear this: **At its core, Christianity is not about giving to God or doing things for God. Christianity is about what God has done for you.** The heart of the gospel is not spelled 'd-o,' but 'd-o-n-e.' **As Adon said, this is basically a one-point message**, and that's the point.

3 questions this (morning): 1. What exactly did God promise David? 2. What was the basis of the promise? And 3. How did David respond?

1. What exactly did God promise David?

- "A house." God said, "I'll build YOU a house, David." When David first used the word as something he wanted to build for God, he was referring only to a **Temple**, a place for God's presence to dwell in the Ark of the Covenant. When God says, "No, David, I'll build you a house," he means more than just a physical building for his presence--he also means a **kingdom, a dynasty**.
- God says, "And I'm going to do this through one of your sons." **Vs. 12: "When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom (forever), and he shall build a house for my name..."**
- Question: **Which 'son' is God talking about?** Well, as with other Old Testament prophecies, this prophecy has a **double fulfillment**. There is a short-term one and a long-term one.
 - **The 1st fulfillment came through David's son, Solomon.** Solomon would build the Temple that David wanted to build, a house for God's presence. **And under Solomon**, David's kingdom would thrive like it never had before and never would again. **But--and this is a huge but--Solomon also turned out to be a pretty big disappointment:** He married 700 wives, most of them from foreign nations and clans and he even started to worship some of their idols.
 - **Which is why this prophecy points forward to another son of David:** About 930 years after Solomon, another son was born in the lineage of David, in the very hometown of David himself--the town of Bethlehem. And that Son would be the

embodiment of the house God built for David. Jesus was both the ultimate Temple and eternal King God had promised.

Jesus was the ultimate Temple: He housed the presence of God in himself. **John 1:14 says that in Jesus God became flesh. “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...”** Interestingly the word John uses for “dwelt” there is literally ‘tabernacled.’ Jesus was God *tabernacling* among us; he was the ultimate, walking talking Tabernacle.

Which is why Jesus made confusing statements like, *“If you tear this Temple down, I’ll rebuild it in 3 days.”* And everybody looked around and said, *“What? How could you rebuild the Temple in 3 days? It took hundreds of workers more than 40 years to build it!”* But they thought Jesus was talking about the physical Temple; they didn’t realize, John 2:21, that Jesus was actually speaking of his body--because that was the real Temple now.² He housed the presence of God in himself. And when they tore that Temple down by nailing it to a cross, sure enough, Jesus resurrected that temple in 3 days.

And then, the most amazing thing--he put that presence into us. Jesus said, “When I go to the Father, I’m not going to leave you alone; I’m going to send my Spirit to live inside of you.” The very Spirit that hovered over the Ark of the Covenant is the Spirit that now dwells in me! Interestingly, when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, do you remember what appeared over the heads of the first Christians? Little flames of fire, similar to what appeared over the Ark in the Holy of Holies. God’s presence, which had once hovered above the Ark of the Covenant, now in us by the Holy Spirit.

God’s desire has always been to be united with his people--to be close to them, to walk with them. In the Garden of Eden, God came down and walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of every evening, and they said: “God walks with us.” When God led his people through

the wilderness with a pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, the people said, “God is among us.” When they built the tabernacle and the Temple, and the glory of God came to rest upon it, the people rejoiced and said, “God is in the midst of us.” When Jesus came to earth, they called him “Immanuel,” which meant, literally, “God with us,” And now, by his Spirit, we say, “God in us!”

The point of Christianity has never been merely believing the right things or behaving the right ways; the point is being united to, communing with, and walking with God. Knowing him. Trusting him. Abiding in him as he abides in us--which has been the focus this week in our 21DOPF.

So, Jesus was the ultimate Temple, and **Jesus is the eternal King.** All those prophecies in the Old Testament about an eternal Kingdom that would be established forever and bless the nations--those were all fulfilled in Jesus.

Jesus didn’t just come as our Savior, he came as our King, and I want to pause here for just a moment, because sometimes I don’t think we give enough weight to this idea. We talk about Jesus almost exclusively as a “personal Savior” who we invite into our hearts to forgive our sins. And he is that. But he’s also our King, and that means a few things:

- **As King, he is our authority:** There is no such thing as, “I accepted Jesus as Savior but am not yet fully submitted to him as Lord.” You can’t bifurcate Jesus. If you haven’t submitted to his authority you haven’t received him, because he came as King. To follow him is to join his kingdom. Sometimes people say to me, “I tried Christianity, and it didn’t work.” That’s a joke! All that means I tried to use Jesus to help me achieve another goal that I had--happiness, joy, peace, whatever--but that’s not Christianity. Christianity is submitting to Jesus as King and letting him set the goals. You can’t “try” TOTAL commitment any more than you can try out death. If it’s a TRY, it’s not total.

² Matthew 26:61; John 2:19

- As King, he is our authority, and **As King, he gives us a mission.** This new Kingdom has its own agenda and its own priorities, and when you become a Christian, you become agents of that Kingdom. Just as there is no such thing as a Christian not submitted to Jesus as Lord, there is no such thing as a Christian not on mission. Jesus said we are supposed to pray over every situation, “Let your Kingdom come... on earth as it is in heaven.” Which means that **in every dimension of my life**--in my job, with my money, in every relationship--I say, “What is the Kingdom’s purpose in this?” You can’t have Jesus as your Savior if you haven’t submitted to him as King. There’s no such thing as a Christian not living as an agent of the Kingdom.
- **As King, he reigns.** This passage says that King will appoint his people a place where they will dwell in safety and never be disturbed or afflicted by violent men--and I know it doesn’t always look like that now, because we look around and see all kinds of oppression and sickness and danger--but you know what? Our King defeated death itself, which shows us he has power over all those things, and I believe him when he says that he is working all those things now according to the counsel of his will and for my good. Jesus is not just a personal Savior who forgives my sins; he’s the reigning King who promises to come again soon and wipe away every tear from my eye and in the meantime promises to use all my pain for my good and his glory. Over cancer, he reigns. Over nations, he reigns. Over difficult relationships in my life and relational challenges, he reigns.

So, 1. What exactly was promised to David? A house--a permanent dwelling place for God on earth and an eternal kingdom. Both of those were fulfilled partially in Solomon; they are fulfilled ultimately in Jesus.

2. On what basis did God make this promise?

- One word: Grace. **This Kingdom was not something David would do for God but something God would do for David.**

- Already in our study of David we’ve seen that David is a pretty flawed individual, and it’s only going to get worse from here. In a few chapters we’ll have the Bathsheba incident, where David takes the wife of one of his right hand guys, sleeps with her, and then has that innocent guy murdered.
- And so, God says to David, “This isn’t about you in your goodness building something for me--you could never earn this if you tried; it’s about me, in my goodness, giving something to you.”
- **This might be the hardest lesson to learn to learn in Christianity:** We come to God not with anything to give, only to receive. And the reason that is really hard is because it goes against every ounce of pride that we have. **I come to God as a beggar with literally nothing to offer.** I’m poor, wretched, naked and blind. Whatever I have to offer to God is like a filthy rag. And if you think that comes easy or naturally, you’ve never really done it.
 - **Billy Graham used to say that it’s not usually** people’s sins that keeps them out of heaven; it’s their good works. God has abundant mercy even for the biggest sins; it’s people’s pride in their good works and their sense of personal worthiness that keep them from throwing themselves on that mercy.
 - **In the same way, it’s not our weaknesses that keep us from being used by God;** it’s our strengths, because our strengths keep us from allowing God to do what he’s offered to do.
- Church historians say that it was this emphasis on our utter spiritual poverty that characterized the preaching of the Great Awakening. **They say that you can summarize the preaching of the Great Awakening** as two basic points: “Repent of your wrong-doing.” That’s the obvious one. “Turn from your sin.” But what caught everyone off guard was the Evangelists’ second point: “Repent of your strengths, because your strengths have filled you with pride and kept you from throwing yourselves on God’s mercy.”
- **One farmer alive at the time, Nathan Cole**--was in the crowd listening as one of these great Evangelists preached, and he wrote about the experience in a journal. I love how he described it: “My

hearing him preach gave me a heart wound. By God's blessing my old foundation was broken up, and I saw that my righteousness would not save me..." (And I turned to God for mercy).

- **"The old foundation** was broken up." For God to build you a house, to make you part of this kingdom, he has to break up your old foundation.

If I ask you, **"Why do you think God will let you into heaven?"** and you answer with anything about you, your old foundation isn't broken up yet. You see, I have only one answer--"This is all my hope and peace, nothing but the blood of Jesus!" "Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to thy cross I cling!"

If I ask you, **"Why do you think you're going to be a successful parent?"** Or, "Why do you think you can live an effective Christian life, and you point to anything about you, then the old foundation isn't broken up yet. You're still trying to build a house for God. You haven't learned the truth of **John 15:5**, where Jesus said, "Apart from me, you can do NOTHING."

Do you want to do something great for God? Give up any idea that you can do something great for God. Greatness is not with you; it's with God.

My righteousness, my strength, my hope--it's all with him. One of the early missionary explorers of Africa, **David Livingstone**, in his travel learned about an African custom on certain parts of the continent where, when you made a treaty with another tribe, that chief would take a knife and carve his symbol like a tattoo into your arm. Some chiefs would have half a dozen or so of those symbols--so, say when you were out by yourself or with a small group of people--and you were attacked, you would uncover your arm, and you'd be saying, "My strength is not just what you see here around me, my strength is all this power represented by these symbols on my arm."

This is what the Christian does: When the guilt and shame of my sin taunts me; when the challenges presented by parenting or my own sinful struggles threaten to overwhelm me, I unsheath my arm, and I say, "My righteousness and my strength are not what you see here. My strength comes from my King who has put his mark into my soul. My help cometh from the Lord."

1. *What was the promise? A house.* 2. *What was the basis of the promise? Grace.*

3. What is our response?

18 Then King David went in and sat before the Lord and said, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? 20 And what more can David say to you? 21 Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have brought about all this greatness, to make your servant know it.

22 Therefore you are great, O Lord God. For there is none like you, and there is no God besides you... 23 And who is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making himself a name and doing for them great and awesome things... 24 And you established for yourself your people Israel to be your people forever. And you, O Lord, became their God.

26 And your name will be magnified forever, saying, 'The Lord of hosts is God over Israel...'

What is the response? This passage started with David wanting to go and do for God; it ends with David sitting in wonder at all that God has done for him.

And that's the essence of the gospel: not that we go and do great things for God; but that we sit in wonder at the great things he's done for us. He gives us grace, we give him glory.

I have really **good news** for you this morning. **Two things**--these are two absolutely **life-changing things**--**2 things you won't hear in any other religious context:**

A. God only offers grace, not reward

- God did not choose David and his line because of their righteousness.
- If he had, David would never have made it.
- **God gave David a one-sided promise**, and that means in a couple chapters when David sins grievously with Bathsheba and murders Uriah, one his best friends, that didn't cancel out God's covenant. And when Solomon, David's son, wanders from God and marries 700 women and worships their idols, **that didn't cancel out God's covenant, either**. And when Israel wandered from God again and again and God sent them into exile to wake them up from their sin, **still, that did not cancel out God's covenant**.
- God had made to David a one-sided promise, and the basis of that promise was not how well they had performed or would perform. That basis was grace.
- **One of my favorite illustrations of this came from another one of my kids--Allie**. When she was about 10, we were watching the show "the Voice" together as a family. In that show, these amateur, wannabe singers sing for a group of 3-4 professional judges, and if one of them likes your voice and thinks you have potential, they hit this button and their chair spins around and it says in real big letters across the bottom, "I want you" ([pic](#)). Well, one night we were at family devotions and we were talking about

grace and Allie said, "It's like God hit his button and spun around his chair, saying, 'I want you,' before we even started singing."

That's what God did with David. It's what he does with us. He didn't choose us because of our righteousness, or even because of our *potential* for righteousness, and that means he won't reject us because of our failures in righteousness.

- **I love the words of Charles Spurgeon here:** "I have no questions that God chose me, because I am quite sure that if God had not chosen me I should never have chosen him; and I am sure he chose me before I was born, or else he never would have chosen me afterwards; and he must have elected me for reasons unknown to me, for I never could find any reason in myself why he should have looked upon me with special love. So I feel like I am forced to accept this doctrine."³

If God didn't choose you because of your righteousness, then your lack of it won't cancel his choice. The basis of his relationship with you, from start to finish, is grace. God is building you a house, and he's made you a one-sided promise.

Of course, you have to repent of your sin to receive that grace. To "repent" means you acknowledge that your sin is wrong and that he is the Lord; you submit to him and ask for his help in overcoming your sin. If you don't repent, it's like you are refusing God's offer.

But some of you are like, "Pastor, I've repented. I know I've done that. But, I fall into that same old sin again and again. How many times will God forgive me if I keep falling back into the same sin? I mean, surely there comes a point where God says, *'That's it. Enough. You're done.'*"

³ Charles Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students: Book 2*, p. 47

The Apostle Peter once asked Jesus that question--he said to Jesus, "How many times should I forgive someone who sins against me?" And Jesus said, "Base it off how often your Heavenly Father forgives you." And Peter was like, "7x?" (7 felt like a spiritual number). And Jesus was like, "Pfff. Try 70 x 7." The point of that, btw, is not that 490 is the magical number, and once you hit 491, God says, "That's it!" and goes Old Testament on you. In the Bible, 7 is the number of completion, so saying 70x7 is like saying "times infinity."

Some of you have struggled and struggled in the Christian life, or with an addiction, or with an ongoing sin, and you think surely God is done with you. 70x7. Or I love how Solomon explains **Proverbs 24:16**), **"The righteous man falls seven times, and rises again."**⁴ Falls 7x! Imagine walking behind a guy in Target who fell 7 times! The first time it happens you snicker. If he looks like he is about to do it a second time, you get out your phone, film it, and send it to your friends. If he does it a 3rd and 4th time, you post it on YouTube. But then if he keeps falling, you conclude there is something wrong with him and you feel bad about posting it. At 7x you're calling an ambulance; the guy can't walk. "A righteous man falls 7x and gets back up again." In the Bible, 7 is the number of completion, so saying the righteous man falls 7 times means that all he does is fall. The righteous man in God's eyes may be someone who falls, a lot. The righteous man shows he is righteous not by never falling, but by what he does when he falls. He gets back up. Righteous people fall so much that it seems they can barely walk at all! But each time they get back up looking at Jesus.

Grace, grace, God's grace. Because God didn't choose you because you were strong, he won't give up on you when you are weak.

Let me make this about as real as I can make it: I have a friend who morally failed in his marriage. It was a horrendous, inexcusable sin. He has since repented and been restored to his marriage, but for a

⁴ Proverbs 24:16

while it looked like everything was over for him. And he told me, one time: "The sweetest doctrine in all my life is that God chose me... because in the darkest days of my despair, I knew if he didn't choose me because of my righteousness, he won't give up on me because of my sin."

God's offer to us, like it was to David, is one-sided. We don't perform and God rewards. No, God gives and we receive. **Here's what I want to say to a bunch of you:** *Stop trying to negotiate with God.* Some of you are like, "Oh, God if you will do this, I will do this... and I promise that... and never again will I..."

God's promise to David was one-sided. If David and God had been having a negotiation, David never would have made it out of the starting blocks. But God made a one-sided promise to David, and God kept all his promises to David even though David kept none of his promises to God.

God has made a one-sided promise to you and he'll keep it if you'll receive it. He'll be faithful to keep his side of the promise even when you stumble in keeping yours. Your stumbling doesn't cancel out his grace. His grace is greater than your sin; his faithfulness is greater than your unfaithfulness; his strength, greater than your weaknesses.

You--I don't care who you are--YOU can have peace with God, but you have to stop relying on your own promises to yourself and God and accept his unconditional promises to you.⁵

Here's my 2nd piece of good news:

B. God is building you a house

⁵ These two paragraphs owe a lot to Andy Stanley's treatment of this passage.

God didn't need David to build him a house; David was incapable of that, anyway. **God was like**, "Oooh, David, you want to build me a house of cedar? David, wait until you see what my house is like up here! Cedar is for hamsters, David. My streets up here are made out of gold. I hiccup and new galaxies form. I don't need anything from you."

Asaph, who was David's song-writer, expressed it like this in Psalm 50. Through Asaph, God said:

Psalm 50:12–15, "If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and all its fullness are mine..."

- I wouldn't come to you if I had a need; I could create a whole universe full of you's if I wanted.
- I don't need your money--I own the cattle on a thousand hills and I can sell off any of them anytime I need. God is always liquid; he's never pinched for cash. He doesn't need our money.
- **He doesn't need our talents**--he's proven time and time again he can do whatever he wants when he wants--he can speak through the mouths of donkeys and supply finances in the mouths of fish.

What are our obligations to him? Psalm 50:12: Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and perform your vows (your obligations) to the Most High. IOW, give God glory for what he's done for us and do whatever he has asked you to do.

And then, watch this--And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will glorify me." Do you see that? **How do we glorify him?** By all the great things we do for him? By all the amazing things we build for him? No, we will glorify him by calling on him in the day of trouble and having him supply for us...

God is building you a house, and that "house" is all the ways he's bringing the Kingdom through you. He's not asking you to build the house!

God doesn't need me to build this church... God is the one building this house.

Parents, God doesn't need you to save your kids... God is the one building that house, too.

Overwhelmed wife, God doesn't need you to fix your husband... God will build your house

Worried dad, God doesn't need you to make ends meet... the Lord watches over your house

Defeated addict, God doesn't need you to free yourself from those chains... God is giving you a house

Discouraged high school student, God will get you into that college he wants you to go to. He's promised to build you a house.

In all these things, God is building you a house. Salvation is not in you, it's in him. It's like God told Israel when he first delivered them in the Exodus: "The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be silent." (Exodus 13:14)

Now, am I saying that the Christian life is therefore just sitting around doing nothing; you just "let go and let God" and do nothing in all these relationships? Of course not. Like Psalm 50 says, I offer myself to God and say, "How do you want to use me?" **I have a role in all these relationships. But you understand: There's a big difference between leaving all of these things at Jesus' feet and doing whatever he asks me to do in them--there's a big difference in that and assuming you are the one responsible to build all these things.** If you look at a great work of art, every stroke on the canvas came through a paintbrush. But the brilliance and beauty wasn't in the paintbrush; it was the hand of the artist wielding the brush. That's me with God.

He's the painter; I'm just the paintbrush. I have a role, but it's to be submitted to him as his instrument.

Let me read this once more: 18 Then King David went in and sat before the Lord and said, "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far?... 20 And what more can David say to you? 21 Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have brought about all this greatness, to make your servant know it.

If you underline stuff in your Bible, underline the word "sat" and the word "know." This passage started with David wanting to go and do. It ends with God telling him to sit and know.

What you're seeing there is a response that will last throughout eternity--a sense of wonder at how great is the grace that God has shown us. Revelation says that for eternity his name will be written on our foreheads. I don't know if that's literal or not, but I know it means that what we'll boast about is God's grace not my goodness. My identity will not be how good I am or how much I've accomplished, my boast will be in his grace. Mine won't say, "Builder of Summit Church" or "Great dad." Thankfully, it won't say, "Sinful failure" or "Embarrassing Christian," even though I've earned both of those labels at times, too. Both mine and yours will say one word: "Jesus." *"And when we've been there, 10,000 years, bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun!"*

The center of Christianity is not going and doing something great for God; it is sitting in wonder at all he's done for you. *That's why David starts this passage with a desire to go and do and it ends with a command for him to sit and know.*

The whole point of the Christian life is WORSHIP. The Westminster Confession famously asks, "What is the chief end (purpose) of man?" Do you know the answer? The chief end of man is not to do

something for God or build something for God or fund something for God or accomplish something for God, but to glorify God and enjoy him forever. To stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene, and wonder how he could love me, a sinner, condemned unclean! And then to spend the rest of our days, throughout eternity, saying, "How wonderful! How marvelous! And my song will ever be--how marvelous, how wonderful, is my Savior's love for me!"

Stand... and sing this, realizing this is the point, this is why you were saved. Say with David, "Who am I that you would do these great things for me? And rest in his one-sided promise and give him glory!"

Bullpen:

((Let me say, before we jump in--I hope you're enjoying the 21DOPF--as we often say, fasting is not a way to get God in a better mood to hear from you; it's a way to get you in a better position to hear from him. Sometimes people think if they starve themselves God will be more willing to listen to them. That's foolish. All that was necessary to get God in the right mood to hear from you was accomplished by the gospel. No. Fasting is about putting you in that place where you can hear from him; and, fasting is about training our souls that there's more life in him than there is in the meeting of any of our physical needs. When Jesus fasted for 40 days in the wilderness and Satan tempted him with bread, do you remember what Jesus responded with by saying? "Man shall not live by bread alone." When you are really hungry, food is a kind of life--it picks you up, fills you up, makes you happy, adds enjoyment, takes away your hunger. Food is life. When you fast and you feel that hunger, instead of turning to food for life, you turn to God and say, "Knowing you brings more life to my soul than even food does. Man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." Ideally, of course, I'll have both, but if I'm ever put in a position where I have to choose one or the other, I choose you," and sometimes we fast so we can train our soul that the sustenance it needs is not found in the meeting of physical needs but in his word.))

Salvation is not primarily about you doing something for God; salvation is about *knowing* something—sitting in stunned awe in the presence of God, realizing what he's done for you.

- Christianity is not about you attempting great things for God and you achieving them, but God doing great things for you

and you receiving them. Christianity is more about believing and receiving than it is succeeding and achieving. Here's what I want to say to many of you: Stop trying to negotiate with God. God's promise to David was one-sided. If David and God had been having a negotiation, David never would have made it, because David broke almost every promise he ever made to God. But God kept all his promises to David and that's what it was about. God's promises to you are one-sided. Stop trying to negotiate. God has made a promise to you and has done all that is necessary to fulfill that promise, if you'll receive it and let him have his way in your life. His grace is greater than your sin; his faithfulness greater than your unfaithfulness; his power greater than your bondage. Just believe, receive, and live in the light of his unconditional promise.

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- You, I don't care who you are, YOU can have peace with God. But you have to abandon relying on your own promises to yourself and to God and start relying on his unconditional promises.⁶
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- in our country was an emphasis on the inability of man to please God. The preaching of the Great Awakening was not about, "You're not doing enough for God; do more." It was, "You are utterly unable to please God or do great things for him."
- **New Values:** The world's kingdoms have values-- money, power, acquisition. Jesus' new Kingdom has values--mercy, generosity, life. In the
- *Jesus as King and living Temple means...* **Presence:** The whole point of the Temple was God dwelling with his people. That has always been part of God's chief purpose, by the way--to be *with* his people. We saw it in the Garden of Eden, God came

⁶ These two paragraphs owe a lot to Andy Stanley's treatment of this passage.

down every evening and Adam and Eve said, "He walks with us." When God led his people out of Egypt with a pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, the people said, "God is before us and behind us." When they built the tabernacle, they said, "God is among us!" When they built the Temple and the glory of God settled upon it, the people rejoiced and said, "God is in the midst of us." When Jesus came to earth, they called him "Immanuel," which means, literally, "God is with us," And now, after his death and resurrection, Jesus has sent his Spirit to dwell in our hearts, and we say, "God in us!" The point of Christianity is not that you believe the right things and behave the right ways; the point is that God dwells with you. Many of you judge the Christian life by what you believe and how you behave. But the central question is, "Do you walk with God? Do you have a relationship with him?" Because that's the whole point.

And do you think, David, if I needed a house, I'd come to you? You think I'd ask YOU to build me one? You want to make me a house of cedar? Cedar is for hamsters, David. You've got no idea what I've got going up here. My streets up here are made of gold. No, David, I don't need anything from you.

In every other religion in the world, you do something for God and he blesses you. Christianity is unique among all religions because in Christianity God does something for you and you receive him and praise him for it.