

David: Highs and Lows

David and Nathan
2 Samuel 7

Introduction:

David's plan to build a temple sounded like a very good plan. His intentions were good and the rationale for his vision was admirable. It just didn't seem right that a King would live in a cedar palace while the King's God dwelt in a tent. David would make things right. A temple befitting Israel's God would be built, and David would oversee the building.

But God put a stop to that plan. God had something else in mind.

This week in our reflections on the highs and lows of David's life we come to a moment in which David was beginning to get things backwards. In the opening lines of 2 Samuel 7 we find David at the top of his game, settled in his palace, at rest from constantly fighting his enemies. Relishing his success David decides it's time for him to do something big for God. He makes plans to build God a permanent house – a glorious temple.

Sounds like a good idea, right?

But God, speaking through the prophet Nathan, vetoes David's plan. God will have none of it. Instead, what God rehearses for David is the story of God's own actions in David's life. Every significant moment in David's life was about God's action, not David's. God is the subject of the verbs that truly matter.

The same is true of your life. The verbs in your life that truly matter are not the ones you do or make happen. Your life is not about the hard work you've put in or the smart decisions you've made or the things you've accumulated or the charitable deeds you've performed. While all of those things may be true, they are secondary to what God has done in you and for you.

God is the subject of every verb that truly matters in your life. This is the grammar of grace. The question for us is, how will we live this day in response to what God has done?

Scripture Reading:

2 Samuel 7

For Discussion / Reflection:

1. Can you look back on a time or circumstance in your own life when you see now that God had a better plan?

2. In what way in 2 Samuel 7 a “low” moment in David’s life? In what way is it a “high” moment?
3. Read 2 Samuel 7:18-19. How would you describe David’s response to being told “No” by the God through the prophet Nathan? How do we tend to respond when things don’t go according to our plan?
4. In your own words, what is God saying to David in 2 Sam. 7:5-7?
5. Read vv. 8-16. What are the key verbs in this passage? What does this tell us about God? What does this tell us about David?
6. Why might 2 Samuel 7 be a good passage to read during the season of Advent?

Prayer:

Gracious God, do what you see fit to do in our lives this day. And help us by your Spirit to live and act in response to your grace, doing all things in humble thankfulness through Jesus our Lord. Amen.