

## What is it that really matters? A Meditation on 1 Chronicles 28:9

By Hilmer Jagersma

In the midst of the busyness of this life, do you ever take the time to reflect? Do you ever hit the pause button, put everything aside, and just take a moment to look back? It's good to do this from time to time. To reflect on your life, to look back over all the experiences you've had, the relationships you've built and the struggles you've faced. And when you do this, when you look back over the course of your life, you'll be amazed at how much you've learned about people, about life, and about God. So let me ask you this...if you were to look back at your life what would be the lesson that you would want others to know? Out of all the things that you've gone through, what is the one piece of advice that you would want to pass along to those you love? What is it that really matters?

As we go through life we can't help but think about these things from time to time. It's only natural that we want to look back on our own lives and tell others about the lessons we've learned. Looking back on my own life, for example, one of the things that I treasure most is a letter that my father wrote to us, his children, a few years before he died. In this letter my Dad did exactly what we're talking about today. He looked back on his life and he tried to provide us with a short list of the lessons he'd learned. He pointed out the mistakes he'd made, the things he'd do differently, and above all, he tried to emphasize the things that we should focus on, the things that really matter. And that's what we're going to be reflecting on in today's passage. The things that really matter.

The passage we will be reflecting on today comes from 1 Chronicles 28:9. In this verse, we have a snapshot of an important moment in the history of Israel. Specifically, we are witnessing a change in leadership. David is now an old man and he knows that the time has come to pass the torch to his son. So what does a father say at a time like this? What advice do you give to a young man who is about to take over control of an entire nation? What is it that David would want Solomon to know? If we were to

guess, we might think that David would want to discuss military strategies, wealth management, or taxation plans. But are these the things that really matter? Not according to David. Let's look at what David tells his son Solomon. We read:

*And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every desire and every thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever.*

What a message. "Serve God, Solomon," says David. "That's what really matters. Out of any advice that I can give you, this is most important. Don't get caught up with the meaningless things of this life Solomon. Serve God with whole hearted devotion and with a willing mind. Don't set your focus on riches and power. That's not what life is about." And David would know. Of all people, David would know.

All you have to do is scan over David's life and you can see that few people have gone through the highs and lows of life like this man had. David had gone from relative poverty to immense wealth. He had gone from being a nobody to having his name chanted in the streets. When David was a young lad, nobody would ever have expected that he would be king. Not only was he a simple shepherd boy but he was the youngest of all his brothers. With all those brothers in front of him he would never be expected to lead his own family, much less a nation. And yet God had a plan for him. The second book of Samuel tells us how God chose David from among all the people of Israel and promised him that one day he would be king. God blessed him and "the spirit of God" was upon David. As a young man he became famous for killing the mighty giant Goliath with just his slingshot and a few stones. And his fame would only grow. David would go on to become the most recognized and accomplished soldier in the entire Israelite army. We are told that, "In everything he

did he had success, because the hand of the Lord was with him."

Despite this, life was not always easy for David. For one thing, David was not made king immediately. He had to wait until God decided it was time for him to be king. This meant years of hiding from the jealousy of King Saul, living on the run, always in fear of his life. He was a nomad, homeless, moving from place to place. These were hard times for David, times when God's promise of kingship seemed to be in question. But God did have a plan and he was using these years to teach David to trust God completely. This was a hard lesson for David to learn, and it is a hard lesson for us to learn as well. Like you and I, David had struggles. There were times in his life that he turned away from God and did the things he wanted to. All we have to do is look at the story of Bathsheba, the beautiful wife of Uriah. David wanted her and he took her for himself. And when she became pregnant David had her husband killed in battle in order to cover up the affair. No, David did not always do what was right in the eyes of the Lord. However, through these struggles, through the failures and the low points in his life David came to see God's grace in his life. More and more, David began to understand that God had never left him. Despite the many mistakes in his life, the many short comings, God showed David his mercy, forgiveness and faithfulness.

And in today's passage, as David thought about the lessons in his life, God's faithfulness to him was what stood out. Not his money, his stockpiles of gold, or the strength of his army. In David's eyes those were just by-products of the goodness of God. And so, as he hands over the kingdom to his son Solomon, he wants him to remember this:

"It's not about you Solomon. This life, it is all about God. Make that your focus," says David. "Put everything you can into it, give Him 100% devotion. Spend time learning his will, time in prayer, and in

everything you do, commit your entire life to His service. And don't try to fool him, Solomon. Don't try to pull the wool over His eyes, because I've done that," says David, "and God will not be fooled. He searches every part of your being, every thought, and desire. God knows you inside and out, and he wants you to serve him with your whole heart."

So as you reflect on your life, what is it that you want others to know? What is the message that you want others to hear? I pray that you may pass on the wisdom of David. I hope that as you reflect, as you think about your best experiences and your most difficult struggles, you are also able to see God's faithfulness in your life. As you spend time studying the Bible, as you get to know God better, you will be able to see the depth of God's grace. You see, David didn't really deserve to be king more than anyone else, nor do we deserve God's promises more than anyone else. And yet, God gave a promise to Solomon, and he has given a promise to you and to me. In Romans 10:9 we read, "*...if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*" God's promises will never change. What he said to Solomon still holds true for you, for me, and for all those who believe in Him. "*If you seek him, he will be found by you.*" Through faith in Jesus Christ, we are able to seek God and to join the family of believers. This is the message that David passed on to Solomon, it's the message that my father passed on to me, and I pray that this is what you would also share with those you love. For serving God with our whole heart, that is what is important in this life, and that is what truly matters.



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