Pastor Cedric Cobb

RECOVER

The Grace to Recover All



PERSONAL / GROUP GUIDE

Lessons from David at Ziklag

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Family,

I'm so glad you're taking a moment to go through this ebook. My prayer is that you gain the knowledge and the language you need to do the deep work.

More than giving you information, I want this to be an extension of how we model our devotion as a church. I want to give our Surface tribe the chance to see the practical side of faith, and I believe this is something we will continue to do and provide at scale as our church continues to grow.

I don't want The Grace to Recover to be just a sermon. I want us to start taking sermons and doing the work of applying them to our lives. This word shouldn't just sound good. It should work good.

Let's do the work together.

Pastor Cedric Cobb

OVERVIEW

Lost everything. Recovered all.

David and his men came home to Ziklag and lost everything. What happened next is a lesson in how to recover.

I want you to look at loss differently. Strengthen yourself in God. Extend mercy, even to those who have wronged you. And believe that God is able to restore not just some things, but all things.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Read 1 Samuel 30 in its entirety. Whether you are working through this on your own or with a group, come prepared to be honest about a season of loss or difficulty in your own life and how you responded to it.

The Language of Recovery

The Amalekites raided Ziklag and carried off everything that belonged to David and his men. The city was gone, the families were gone, and the men who had followed David were talking about stoning him.

David made a different choice. He did not stay in grief, and he did not give in to the pressure around him. He strengthened himself in the Lord.

That choice moves us past a faith that only comes to God to get something, toward a faith that depends on him fully, every day. Recovery is not passive. It takes participation, mercy toward those who have wronged us, and a willingness to let God restore not just the big things but every detail of what was lost.

Faith and speech are deeply connected. The way we talk to ourselves and to God in loss decides whether we rise and go after what was taken, or stay in grief indefinitely.

What to Expect

I want you to walk through this book, not rush through it. Use it on your own or with a group, and let each section slow you down and point you back to God. Here is what I put inside for you.

Key Takeaways	Seven truths from 1 Samuel 30, each with a short explanation, to reflect on one at a time. Ten more key points follow for going deeper.
Ten Quotes from PC	Ten lines from my message, The Grace to Recover, set large so you can read them slowly and sit with them.
Scripture	Eight passages that anchor the message, with a note on what each one speaks to.
Stories	Seven stories, from David at Ziklag to Lazarus at the tomb, each with a short retelling and how it connects to the message.
Discussion Questions	Thirteen questions to work through on your own or with a group. Not every question needs an answer. Depth matters more than covering everything.
Practical Applications	Five actions to practice this week, on your own or before your group meets again.
Prayer Points	Four places to pray, for courage, mercy, complete recovery, and strength for others.
Memory Verse	Proverbs 3:5, to carry with you through the week.

01 /07

Faith is not transactional — it is fundamental.

Faith is not a tool we use to get what we want from God. It is the very foundation of how we are meant to walk with him daily. Without it, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6).

01

02 /07

Your blessing is not dead — it has just been moved.

David and his men found no bodies at Ziklag. What they feared was gone was actually still recoverable. Loss does not always mean permanent destruction.

02

03 /07

Strengthening yourself in God is a choice.

Every man at Ziklag wept, but only David made the decision to strengthen himself in the Lord. Grief is permitted, but it is not a permanent address.

03

04 /07

Recovery requires you to use the injured part again.

Just as physical therapy works the area of injury, spiritual recovery requires us to revisit the places that hurt most — our trust, our generosity, our forgiveness — and allow God to restore correct function.

04

05 /07

God recovers everything, not just the parts we want back.

The text says nothing was missing — whether small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything taken. God is a God of complete restoration, not partial recovery.

05

06 /07

Recovery is not just for you.

David's strength benefited his entire army, the 200 men too exhausted to fight, and even friends who were not part of the battle at all. Your recovery has a reach beyond yourself.

06

07 /07

Forgiveness is not for the other person — it is for you.

Withholding forgiveness does not protect you. It keeps the injury in place and blocks the mobility that real recovery requires.

07

Ten Quotes from PC

Ten lines from my message, The Grace to Recover. Read them slowly, and let them sit with you.

I need you to know that your blessing ain't dead. It's just been moved.

Recovery doesn't happen because you aren't injured. It happens in spite of the injury.



The enemy is banking on your injury becoming permanent.



You can experience a fake version of recovery where you shield yourself from getting hurt again. When real recovery is restored mobility. Real recovery is when you can do the same thing you used to do before you got hurt.

All these men shed the same tears, but not all the men gained the same strength.

People are with you until you lose. His whole squad was fine. The moment they accrued damage, the moment they suffered loss, the same leader they celebrated, now they ain't with no more.



David had to fight for people who didn't want to fight for him.



Forgiveness ain't for them. It's for you. So you just want what they did to you to block access from heaven.

You don't have to know how. Get how out of your brain. Get who in your heart.

Maybe the problem is we have a better indoctrination on depression, anxiety, grief, and fear than we do on strength, joy, repentance, restoration.

Key Points

01 Faith is not merely transactional but should be fundamental to a believer's identity and daily walk with God.

02 Loss must be viewed through the lens of faith — what appears gone is not necessarily dead, only displaced.

03 Recovery requires active participation; God often gives strength to go get what was lost rather than simply returning it without effort.

04 Strengthening yourself in the Lord, as David did, is a choice that produces courage in others who are too exhausted or broken to find it themselves.

05 Mercy toward those who have wronged you, including enemies and those who were absent in the fight, is a prerequisite for full recovery.

Key Points, Continued

06 Bitterness, unforgiveness, and the need for an apology before extending forgiveness are spiritual hindrances to recovery.

07 God recovers everything — nothing small or great is overlooked — when we pursue restoration with the right heart.

08 The garment of praise is something deliberately put on, not passively worn, and it is the antidote to the spirit of heaviness.

09 Leaders must be willing to fight for people who are not willing to fight for them, just as David fought for men who wanted to stone him.

10 The gospel of recovery extends to those who could not fight, those who were exhausted, and even those who were not present — it is not reserved only for those who earned it.

SCRIPTURE

The Anchors

SCRIPTURE

01

1 Samuel 30

The primary passage: David's return to Ziklag, the raid by the Amalekites, David strengthening himself in the Lord, and the full recovery of all that was taken.

SCRIPTURE

02

Proverbs 3:5

The call to trust in the Lord with all your heart and not rely on personal understanding.

SCRIPTURE

03

Hebrews 11

The hall of faith, illustrating that faith has always been the foundation of God's work through people.

SCRIPTURE

04

Psalm 30:5

The assurance that weeping endures for a night but joy comes in the morning.

SCRIPTURE

The Anchors, Continued

SCRIPTURE

05

Isaiah 61:3

The garment of praise given in exchange for the spirit of heaviness.

SCRIPTURE

06

Isaiah 40:31

Waiting on the Lord renews strength.

SCRIPTURE

07

John 10:10

Christ came to give life abundantly.

SCRIPTURE

08

2 Corinthians 5:18-19

The ministry of reconciliation.

The Stories

These are the stories I turn to throughout this message. Each one points back to the Father's heart to pursue, to restore, and to reconcile, and each one reminds us that we all have a role to play in partnership with him.

As you read them, remember this: sometimes the promise is guaranteed, but so is the process.

THE PROMISE AND THE PROCESS

The promise is guaranteed. So is the process.

God guaranteed David victory. That guarantee also meant David had to show up again to fight.

1

David at Ziklag

1 SAMUEL 30

David and his 600 men returned home to Ziklag and found it burned to the ground. The Amalekites had carried off their wives, their children, and everything they owned. The men wept until they had no strength left, and then they began talking about stoning David. Instead of giving in to grief or to the pressure around him, David strengthened himself in the Lord. He asked God what to do and was told to pursue, because he would overtake the raiders and recover everything. Two hundred men were too exhausted to go on and stayed behind. David and the rest pressed on, and they recovered it all: the wives, the children, and every piece of spoil, with nothing missing. David then shared the spoil with the men who had stayed behind and sent some to friends who had not been in the battle at all.

WHAT I WANT YOU TO SEE

Strength in God is a choice, and recovery reaches beyond the one who fights for it.

STORY 2 OF 7 · 1 SAMUEL 30

The Egyptian Servant

On the way to find the raiders, David's men came across an Egyptian lying in a field. He was half-starved. His Amalekite master had abandoned him three days earlier when he fell sick. David's men gave him bread, water, figs, and raisins until he recovered. Then he led them straight to the enemy camp.

WHAT I WANT YOU TO SEE

Mercy shown to broken and unlikely people can unlock the very information needed for breakthrough.

2

STORY 3 OF 7 · HOSEA 1-3

Hosea and Gomer

God told the prophet Hosea to marry Gomer, a woman who would not stay faithful to him. She left and fell into a life that ended in bondage. Even then, God told Hosea to go and love her again and to buy her back. Hosea's own marriage became a picture of how God pursues his people, even when they have walked away.

WHAT I WANT YOU TO SEE

God calls us to pursue and restore relationships that look compromised, reflecting the Father's heart toward the unfaithful.

3

STORY 4 OF 7 · LUKE 15:11-32

The Prodigal Son

A younger son asked his father for his share of the inheritance, left for a distant country, and wasted everything. When a famine hit, he ended up feeding pigs and hungry enough to eat what they ate. He decided to go home and ask to be a servant. His father saw him while he was still a long way off, ran to him, and embraced him. He put a robe, a ring, and sandals on him and threw a feast, before the son had finished his speech.

WHAT I WANT YOU TO SEE

Grace and forgiveness come before repentance is fully shown. God's welcome is not earned through performance.

4

STORY 5 OF 7 · JOHN 8:1-11

The Woman Caught in Adultery

A group of religious leaders dragged a woman caught in adultery before Jesus and asked whether she should be stoned, as the Law of Moses commanded. Jesus bent down and wrote on the ground, then told them that whoever was without sin should throw the first stone. One by one, her accusers walked away. Jesus told the woman he did not condemn her, and sent her on her way to sin no more.

WHAT I WANT YOU TO SEE

Jesus did not ask for an apology or proof of repentance before extending grace and forgiveness.

5

STORY 6 OF 7 · MATTHEW 20:1-16

Workers in the Vineyard

A landowner hired workers at the start of the day and went back to hire more at nine, noon, three, and even near the end of the day. When evening came, he paid every worker the same wage. Those who had worked all day complained that it was unfair. The landowner reminded them he had paid exactly what he promised and was free to be generous with what was his.

WHAT I WANT YOU TO SEE

Blessing is not proportional to effort. God's grace is not bound by human standards of fairness.

6

STORY 7 OF 7 · JOHN 11:1-44

Lazarus at the Tomb

Lazarus, a close friend of Jesus, became sick and died in Bethany. By the time Jesus arrived, he had been in the tomb four days. His sisters, Martha and Mary, were heartbroken, and Jesus wept with them. Then he went to the tomb, had the stone rolled away, and called Lazarus by name to come out. Lazarus walked out alive.

WHAT I WANT YOU TO SEE

Grief is real, but it must give way to the authority and action of faith.

7

Opening

Choose one to get started, on your own or with your group.

01 When you hear the word “recovery,” what comes to mind first — physical, emotional, spiritual, or relational recovery?

02 Describe a time when you thought you had lost something permanently, only to find it was still recoverable.

On Loss and Perspective

Reflect on these on your own, or talk them through with your group.

03 In the message I said: “It takes a different kind of faith to not go off the deep end.” How do you typically respond when something goes wrong unexpectedly? Do you tend toward panic, withdrawal, anger, or something else? What does that reveal about where your faith is rooted?

04 David and all 600 men wept together, but only David strengthened himself in the Lord. Why do you think it is easy to share in grief with others but harder to lead others toward strength and recovery? What made David different in that moment?

05 I pointed out that David's men were ready to stone him the moment things went wrong. Have you ever experienced a situation where people who celebrated you turned on you during a season of loss or failure? How did you process that?

On Mercy and Generosity

Reflect on these on your own, or talk them through with your group.

06 David and his men chose to feed and care for the Egyptian servant, not knowing what he would provide in return. Has there been a time when you almost overlooked someone in need and later realized that encounter was significant? What does this story say about how we treat people who appear to be on the margins of our situation?

07 I challenged us: “Can you bless somebody that can't bless you back?” Where in your life do you find it most difficult to give without expectation of return? What fear or past injury is driving that hesitation?

08 David extended mercy to the Egyptian servant who had been part of the very group that raided Ziklag. I said: “God will use who hurt you, or an extension of who hurt you, and you'll have to bless them.” How does this challenge your understanding of who God uses and how he works?

On Forgiveness and Reconciliation

Reflect on these on your own, or talk them through with your group.

09 I drew a distinction between forgiveness and reconciliation, calling reconciliation a ministry rather than simply a decision. What is the difference between forgiving someone and being reconciled to them? Is one required without the other?

10 The wicked and worthless men did not want to share the spoil with those who stayed behind. David overruled them and made it a statute. What does David's response reveal about the character God wants to develop in us, especially toward people who did not carry the same load we did?

11 I said: “Forgiveness is not for them. It is for you.” Do you agree with this? Is there an area in your life where unforgiveness is functioning as a barrier to your own recovery? What would it look like to release that?

On Faith and Speech

Reflect on these on your own, or talk them through with your group.

12 We are in a series called Faith Talk. I connected recovery to speech therapy — the idea that the injured part must be used again to heal. In what ways has a past wound affected how you speak about yourself, your future, or God's ability to restore you? What would it look like to begin speaking differently?

13 I closed with this challenge: “You don't have to know how. Get how out of your brain. Get who in your heart.” Where in your life are you stuck waiting to understand the how before you will trust God to move? What would it look like to shift your focus from the process to the person of God?

Put It Into Practice

Choose one or more to practice this week, on your own or before your group meets again.

1

Identify what feels captive.

Take time this week to write down something you have accepted as permanently lost — a relationship, a dream, a quality about yourself, a sense of joy or purpose. Bring it before God and ask him whether it is truly gone or simply captive and in need of recovery.

2

Strengthen yourself intentionally.

David did not wait for someone else to lift his spirit. He made a deliberate move toward God. This week, identify one specific practice — prayer, worship, Scripture reading, or honest conversation with a trusted friend — and use it to strengthen yourself in a place where you have been weeping.

3

Practice mercy toward someone who has not earned it.

Identify one person in your life who has hurt you or let you down. Take one small action this week that reflects grace rather than retaliation — a kind word, a released expectation, a quiet prayer on their behalf.

Put It Into Practice, Continued

4

Examine your speech.

Pay attention this week to how you talk about your losses, your struggles, and your future. Notice where your language reflects defeat, bitterness, or hopelessness. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you begin to speak in alignment with what God says about recovery and restoration.

5

Extend the blessing beyond your circle.

David sent spoil to people who were not even part of the battle. This week, do something generous for someone outside your immediate circle — someone who cannot repay you and who was not part of your struggle.

Let's Pray

Pray these on your own, or together as a group.

01 Pray for the courage to pursue what feels lost rather than accepting it as gone.

02 Pray for the grace to extend mercy and forgiveness, especially in places where it feels undeserved.

03 Pray for recovery that is complete — nothing missing, nothing left behind.

04 Pray that your personal recovery would become a source of strength for those around you who have not yet found theirs.

3:5

Proverbs 3:5

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not rely on your own understanding, but acknowledge him in all your ways, and he will direct your paths.

Recover. Nothing missing.

I designed this guide for personal reflection or for groups of any size. Feel free to select the questions most relevant to your current season. Not every question needs to be answered — depth of reflection and conversation matters more than covering all the material.

BY

Pastor Cedric Cobb