

Sunday, January 18, 2026 - I WANT A HEART LIKE DAVID – Pastor John Henry Raskin

- This week we explore what it means to have a heart like King David—a heart that seeks God, praises Him, and is open to transformation.
- David is described as “a man after God’s own heart” (**1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22**). More is written about David than any other Old Testament figure.

Praise as a Way of Life

- King David wrote “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.” (**Psalms 150:6**)
- Praise should be both corporate and personal, woven into daily life and moments of gratitude.

The Heart in Biblical Perspective

- The heart represents the core of a person’s inner self—mind, emotions, will, and conscience (**Proverbs 4:23**).
- Transformation of the heart is essential, both before and after becoming a new creation in Christ (**2 Corinthians 5:17; Ezekiel 36:26**).

Why David Was Chosen

- God chose David for his heart, not his outward appearance or status (**1 Samuel 16:7**).
- Unlike Saul, who sought his own glory, David was humble, faithful, and trusted God in all circumstances.

Qualities of David’s Heart

- **Humility:** David acknowledged his strength and success came from God (**Psalms 18:1-3**).
- **Faith:** He trusted God in danger and adversity, as seen in his confrontation with Goliath (**1 Samuel 17:32-37**).
- **Mercy:** David refused to take revenge on Saul, embodying God’s merciful nature (**1 Samuel 24:10-12**).
- **Devotion:** He loved God deeply, prioritized worship, and sought God’s guidance (**Psalms 63:1; 2 Samuel 5:19**).
- **Repentance:** When confronted with sin, David confessed and sought forgiveness, modeling true repentance (**Psalms 51:1-17; 2 Samuel 12:13**).

The Power of Repentance

- David’s response to his own failures (**Psalms 51**) shows the importance of a broken, contrite heart and sincere repentance (**Psalms 34:18; Isaiah 57:15**).
- God desires truth, humility, and hunger for restoration in our hearts.

Application: How to Have a Heart Like David

- Confess and repent sincerely when you fall short (**1 John 1:9**).
- Seek God’s presence and guidance daily (**Psalms 27:4; James 4:8**).
- Praise God in all circumstances (**Psalms 34:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:18**).
- Hunger for transformation and intimacy with God (**Psalms 42:1-2**).
- Live as an example of God’s grace and mercy, teaching others through your life (**Matthew 5:16**).
- A heart like David’s is marked by faith, obedience, worship, and a persistent pursuit of God, despite our flaws.

Let us aspire to such a heart—humble, hungry for God and willing to be restored.

I WANT A HEART LIKE DAVID

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Last week we focused on how we can benefit from intentionally breathing in God and how those around us can benefit when we intentionally breathe out Jesus.

I would like to add one more aspect to our meditation about breathing in God.

When you intentionally breathe in God's breath, intentionally breathe out praise.

It was King David who wrote this Psalm.

Psalm 150:6

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord!

Our praise adds to His glory and should be for us a natural response each time we breathe.

Praise is something that our God who so loved us that He provided us with a Savior deserves. Praise Him because He is worthy!

Praise is something that we do corporately, as a family on Sundays here, and it is also something that I encourage you to do in those quiet daily moments alone with the Lord and intentionally throughout your day.

When you see a beautiful sunrise or sunset praise Him!

When you meet someone who blesses you with their encouragement and character praise God for them!

And especially when He answers your prayers, praise Him!

Now I would like to move on from the breath in our lungs and talk about the attitude of our hearts.

Today we are going to open God's Word and discover why The Lord called David a man after His own heart and how we can have a heart like David.

Would it surprise you to know that more is written in the Bible about David than any other figure in the Old Testament?

For example, Abraham has 14 chapters dedicated to his life. Joseph, the same number. Jacob has 11. Elijah has 10.

But King David has 66 chapters devoted to his life, and that doesn't even include 59 other references to David found on the pages of the New Testament.

David. The man after God's own heart.

In the Bible, the heart isn't the physical organ that every person has pumping blood throughout their body.

It refers to the core of a person's inner self.

In the Bible, the heart of a person represents the center of their being including their mind, emotions, will and conscience.

It is the source of all thoughts, desires, decisions and motivations.

It's the wellspring of life from which actions and words flow, signifying a person's true character, spiritual state and moral compass.

Proverbs 4:23 NASB

Watch over your heart with all diligence,

For from it flow the springs of life.

It is the heart of a person who is not yet born again into the Kingdom of God that most needs transformation.

And once a person becomes a new creation in Christ there still needs to be a sincere desire for their heart to be continually transformed and renewed daily.

So now, let's dive into what exactly made David “a man after God's own heart”.

The phrase originally refers to God's sovereign choice of David as king, in contrast to Saul,

Saul was Israel's first King who was chosen by the will of the people who had rejected God Himself as their King in order to have a King “like the Kings of all the other nations”.

Saul was a good People's Choice because he was tall and looked like someone's idea of a king.

Once he was King, however, Saul was more concerned with his own glory than that with God's.

Therefore, God determined to replace him with a new king.

Through the prophet Samuel, God said to Saul,

1 Samuel 13:14

14 But now your kingdom shall not continue.

The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you.”

When the Lord then sent Samuel to the house of Jesse to select Israel’s new King from among 8 brothers, Samuel went to the tallest most Kingly looking brother first,

1 Samuel 16:7

7 But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

Human culture and perceptions are most often focused on external things.

Things like how we look and how we behave when we are in public.

Many people place their ‘private lives’ off limits to scrutiny for this reason, because the internal reality does not really add up to the way they want to be recognized.

How people look and the way they portray themselves often dominates who we choose for marriage, to be our friends, who gets promoted at work, who we vote for, who we listen to...

However, God is more interested in our character and our motives than how we look or even the actions that we take.

God sees the heart.

So why did He choose David?

First of all, David was a shepherd. It seems that God has a great affinity for shepherds.

After all Jesus calls himself the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep.

Let me say this... Jesus told the people that if they had seen Him, they had seen the exact representation of God the Father.

So let us consider that it is most likely Jesus whose heart David is most closely aligned with.

When we first encounter David in 1 Samuel 16, the Prophet anoints him as Israel's future King.

One chapter later, in 1 Samuel 17, he is just a shepherd boy, the little brother whose father Jesse sends to bring food to his elder brothers who are out fighting King Saul's war with the Philistines.

He arrives to find the army of God's chosen people quaking in fear because of a giant named Goliath.

When David first sees Goliath, and hears of the hopelessness and fear of the well-armed soldiers of Israel at the size and daunting presence of the giant, this is his response...

1 Samuel 17:32-37

32 Then David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

33 And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth."

34 But David said to Saul, “Your servant used to keep his father’s sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, 35 I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. 36 Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God.”

37 Moreover David said, “The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”

And Saul said to David, “Go, and the Lord be with you!”

Here we see a great example of the heart that God called like his own.

These are not the cocky words and actions of a young whippersnapper but the measured response of a true son of God.

David was humble, always acknowledging that all his strength and success came from God.

He demonstrated unwavering faith and trust in the Lord God in the face of danger in his daily life as a shepherd.

And here we see that David was willing to risk his life to defend the honor and glory of the God of Israel.

David displayed a heart of wisdom, integrity and compassion throughout his life.

Although anointed by God to replace Saul, it was many years before he actually became king.

In the time in between, Saul tried numerous times to kill the boy and later the man both personally and with his armies.

Even though David's life was consistently in danger because of Saul he refused to take revenge when he had the opportunity.

In this way he embodied God's merciful nature and also Jesus' desire for us to love our enemies.

David had a deep hunger for God's presence and His Word, which guided his life and provided him strength.

As King, he constantly sought God's guidance through prayer and inquiry before making major decisions.

David showed wholehearted Love and devotion:

David had a profound love for God and expressed it through constant worship and praise, as seen throughout the Psalms he wrote.

He prioritized his relationship with God above all else, including titles or positions.

In this way, like Jesus, he humbled himself and although he was King acted as a servant to his subjects.

David was a man, who like Jesus, knew how to be a friend.

He knew how to love.

His affection and steadfast loyalty to Saul's son Jonathan is one of the great friendship stories in the Bible.

All this to say that David embodied much of what Jesus came to show us about what being truly human would look like in God's eyes.

That said, while Jesus is the sinless Son of God Incarnate, David was human. Human in some of the best ways, and also in some of the worst.

Although he was a man after God's own heart, David was a mere man, prone to sin.

Those of us who read the Bible are acutely aware that David is one of its worst sinners.

Among David's atrocities was committing adultery with a friend's wife, impregnating her, and having her husband murdered to cover the scandal.

Yet even in the depths of his depravity, we see in David one of the most important qualities that God desires in us.

In fact, it is a quality without which we cannot have a real relationship with God in Christ.

David was repentant.

When the prophet Nathan confronted David about his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah, David did not justify his actions or make excuses.

Instead, he immediately confessed, and said "I have sinned against the Lord".

David's repentance was immediate and sincere.

Throughout history emperors, kings and presidents when caught in their own atrocities have doubled down and because of their position or just because of their duplicity, they deny having done anything wrong.

But because his primary desire was to please God David's default posture was one of repentance and he immediately sought God's forgiveness, guidance and restoration.

Even though David's sins were so much deeper and darker, hopefully, than any of us have ever imagined, let alone indulged in, David stands as an testimony to God's incredible grace and mercy towards those who are devoted to Him and who have a repentant heart.

If David in his sin is a template for us at our worst, his example of repentance still shines by showing David's dependence on God to show Himself at his best.

We whose best acts are as but filthy rags before the incredible grace, mercy and generosity of the living God can aspire to David's heart even as he cries out to God for forgiveness.

To see what David's truly repentant heart looks like we only need to go to Psalm 51.

Psalm 51:1-17

**Have mercy upon me, O God,
According to Your lovingkindness;
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,
Blot out my transgressions.**

**2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.**

**3 For I acknowledge my transgressions,
And my sin is always before me.**

**4 Against You, You only, have I sinned,
And done this evil in Your sight—**

**That You may be found just when You speak,
And blameless when You judge.**

**5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
And in sin my mother conceived me.**

**6 Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts,
And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.**

**7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

**8 Make me hear joy and gladness,
That the bones You have broken may rejoice.**

**9 Hide Your face from my sins,
And blot out all my iniquities.**

**10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.**

**11 Do not cast me away from Your presence,
And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.**

**12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,
And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.**

**13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways,
And sinners shall be converted to You.**

**14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,
The God of my salvation,
And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness.**

**15 O Lord, open my lips,
And my mouth shall show forth Your praise.**

**16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it;
You do not delight in burnt offering.**

**17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,
A broken and a contrite heart—
These, O God, You will not despise.**

In this Psalm we see David as a man with a broken heart, a humble heart toward God, and a heart that is hungry to be restored to God.

Since this David is a David who is crying out for restoration let us look at this from the standpoint of one of us who has done something that has caused us to feel fractured in our relationship with God.

David cries out from a broken heart.

First David confesses his sin. He doesn't make excuses, but he acknowledges that his sin is always before him.

He admits that his sin isn't just an act but stems from an inherent corruption asking for thorough cleansing from God and not just a mere priestly rinse and superficial forgiveness.

How does this relate to us?

Jesus took our sin on the Cross and so the inherent corruption part was dealt with when we received Christ,

But when we do sin as believers, and that sin is weighing on us, we still need restoration that only repentance can provide.

David also cries out from a humble heart.

He asks for mercy recognizing that his spirit is crushed, his emotional pain is so great that his bones feel broken.

This shows a true heart of humility.

When we are penitent before God for something that we have truly done wrong it's important that we feel the weight of sin stemming from the pain that we've caused others as well as God.

David also cries out from a hungry heart.

He begs for God to create in him a pure heart and a right spirit showing hunger for more than just forgiveness but asking God for complete transformation.

He asks the Lord not to cast him away or take His Spirit from him demonstrating a deep longing for continued intimacy with God.

When as believers we have transgressed in a way that causes us to feel far from God it is that intimacy that must be restored.

This is the most important part of a heart like David's.

It is also God's deepest desire that that intimacy be restored.

He has never left us, but when we have left Him, it is up to us to return.

A heart after God's own is one that is humble and hungry and willing to be restored.

David shows us that he desires the joy of God's salvation and asks for his hunger for praise and worship to return to him again so that he can serve God in a way that is pleasing to Him.

David ends the Psalm by saying he longs to teach sinners God's ways showing his hunger to live a life that glorifies God publicly so that he can be used as a living example of what true repentance and true relationship with God looks like.

To say David was a man after God's own heart means he deeply desired to please God, sought His will, loved His Word and repented genuinely when he sinned.

A heart like David's is characterized by faith, obedience, worship and persistent pursuit of God despite our human flaws.

That is why I want a heart like David.

Let's pray