

## **A PLACE AT THE KING'S TABLE**

GM // newbies // online ...

Happy New Year to everyone!!

### **[If have Bible 2 Samuel 9]**

I believe this is an important chapter for us as a church.

It speaks into who we are in Christ.

And it gives very key Gospel identities that defines our relationship with Jesus and directs how we follow him.

### **Let's read 2 Samuel 9**

**9 And David said, "Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"<sup>2</sup> Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David. And the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" And he said, "I am your servant."<sup>3</sup> And the king said, "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?" Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet."<sup>4</sup> The king said to him, "Where is he?" And Ziba said to the king, "He is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar."<sup>5</sup> Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar.<sup>6</sup> And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, son**

of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and paid homage. And David said, "Mephibosheth!" And he answered, "Behold, I am your servant." <sup>7</sup> And David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father, and you shall eat at my table always." <sup>8</sup> And he paid homage and said, "What is your servant, that you should show regard for a dead dog such as I?"

<sup>9</sup> Then the king called Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson. <sup>10</sup> And you and your sons and your servants shall till the land for him and shall bring in the produce, that your master's grandson may have bread to eat. But Mephibosheth your master's grandson shall always eat at my table." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. <sup>11</sup> Then Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king commands his servant, so will your servant do." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table, like one of the king's sons. <sup>12</sup> And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Mica. And all who lived in Ziba's house became Mephibosheth's servants. <sup>13</sup> So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he ate always at the king's table. Now he was lame in both his feet.

It is hard not to be moved by this rags-to-riches story.

- A King reaching out to a cripple.
- The powerful helping the weak.
- The rich helping the poor.

**Mephibosheth is so lucky!!! He's won the lottery.**

But this story is much more than David helping a crippled man.

**In verse 1 when David calls his servants he asks, "Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul..."**,

His servants and officers would **not have been surprised** by his request...

What would have made them fall off their chairs was his purpose for finding them.

Showing Saul's family kindness was the exact opposite of what they were expecting.

See, in the **ancient world of kings and kingdoms**, when **power transferred from one family to another** it was common practice to **kill all the previous king's family**.

Now let's add to that the **history between Saul and David**.

During Saul's reign as king of Israel **David was running for his life**.

**Saul had made David public enemy #1!**

David was made out to be a traitor and turncoat who should die.

**David was on the run being hunted down like a terrorist...**

## Like Osama Bin Laden...

Constantly on the run, hiding out in caves and desolate places.

Nowhere was safe. And no one could be trusted. Saul had allies everywhere who more than happy to report David's whereabouts.

Now let's go back to David in this story and David telling his servants he wants to show kindness to Saul's family...

More than likely some of these guys had spent the last few years with David surviving like a hunted animal.

Imagine being one of these guys ...

The last thing you and I would have expected...probably the last thing we would have wanted was to extend kindness to a known enemy.

But this is just what David does.

**He seeks out his enemy to show him kindness. To bless him and give him a place at his table.**

I've read this story many times to the conclusion...  
"Jesse, David gives you a great example to follow. You need to show kindness to your enemies."

That's right. We are called to be kind to our enemies.

But that isn't what changes our hearts.

If all we get from this story is principles and good morals to live by we walk away knowing what to do...

- hits heads not hearts. → no conviction or transformation

... and for a while we act like David...showing kindness...being good Christian boys and girls.

But if no transformation happens we will burn out and give up... [not easy to love our enemies]

What hits us in our hearts is when we realize that we are Mephibosheth and Jesus is David.

### **Identity #1: God Made You His Son/Daughter and Gave You A Place At His Table.**

This story is our gospel story for every one of us.

You are not the hero!! Jesus is the hero!!

You are the object of God's rescue ...

Think about it...

We didn't want God's chosen king (Jesus) to ascend to the throne.

Instead we didn't just try to kill him, we killed him.

The problem was Jesus didn't stay dead, but rose again and is now King. Not just a king with some power, but total power.

**But Jesus didn't seek us out to punish us. He sought us out to show us kindness. Unbelievable kindness.**

See how much we were like Mephibosheth! We didn't stand a chance.

We had no power and we were on the wrong side.

And we don't run to God ... we run from him...hiding out in Lo-debar.

**[Lo-debar / far from Jerusalem ... [means "No Pasture / No Word"] [Like Death Valley]**

Lo-debar isn't just a place of material desolation .... soul desolation.

**Imagine Mephibosheth hiding out in his home.  
Suddenly, there is a knock on the door.  
In walks a man announcing that he is a servant of King David.**

There's Mephibosheth, unable to move, unable to run anywhere, unable to escape...all he can do is listen.

The servant says..."You are coming with me to stand before the King."

On his way to the palace I wonder if Mephibosheth's mind was racing with thoughts of doom..."This is it. I am going to die."

**And then in verse 6 comes the moment that David longed for and Mephibosheth dreaded.**

**He came before the king. What did he do? Did he begin to make excuses and justify himself? Did he begin to parley for terms of peace?**

No!!! He humbles himself and pays homage in the presence of the King.

**This is how Jesus saves us!!!**

We are humbled in Jesus' presence. There is no thought of defending ourselves, only honoring Him.

Then we hear the King speak our name (v6b "Mephibosheth!" (v7) "Do not fear, for I will show you kindness...and I will restore...and you shall eat at my table always."

**You can be sure this is the last thing Mephibosheth expected.**

**And this is why the Gospel is such good news and the greatest drama. It is the last thing we expected to hear...**

**Fear melts away...**  
Not words of judgment...

these are words of love and blessing

**I wonder how often Mephibosheth remembered that moment?**

Can you and I remember that moment? We would be well to...

One of our biggest mistakes we can make as believers is not being in the practice of remembering God's grace and goodness...

**Psalm 63:5-8**

**5 My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food,  
and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips,  
6 when I remember you upon my bed,  
and meditate on you in the watches of the night;  
7 for you have been my help,  
and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy.  
8 My soul clings to you;  
your right hand upholds me.**

Remembering is so good for us. We need to regularly be rehearsing the Gospel to ourselves.

We need to be regularly meditating on God in the Bible and prayer...

**Because not only does it remind us how amazing God is and how dependent we are on him...**



## It also makes us see ourselves rightly...

Check out Mephibosheth's response to the King's kindness?

**2 Samuel 9:8 “And he paid homage and said, ‘What is your servant, that you should show regard for a dead dog such as I?’”**

We are tempted to think that Mephibosheth needs some self-esteem training. **[no Oprah in Lo-debar]**

But that is the mystery of the Gospel at work in all of us.

The Gospel doesn't tell us to get a bigger and better view of ourselves.

It gives us a bigger and better view of God and realistic view of ourselves.

As Timothy Keller puts it:

**“The gospel is this: We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope.”**

**[Apostle Paul: “chief of sinners” “wretched man that I am”]**

My fellow Mephibosheth's can you say in sincerity, “Who am I Lord that you should show regard for a dead dog such as I? Yet, you have shown me kindness...gave me an inheritance and you have given me a place at your Table!!!”

I am more sinful and flawed than I ever dared believe, but at the same time more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than I ever dared hope!

**When our identity is established in this truth it humbles us.**

God doesn't prefer out to the proud, arrogant, strong ... those who "have it all together."

Jesus, The King, invites the weak, and the dead dogs to his table!!!

**STORY: neighbors ugly three-legged dog. Boys..."what is that thing?" He said it is "my dog".**

**This is who we are in Jesus. We are his dog...three legged, ratty, unimpressive...but WE ARE HIS DOG.**

**Jesus sought us out when we were spiritually crippled - poor and powerless - and he picked us up and brought us to His table to be in His presence!!**

**He doesn't call us DEAD DOGS or treat us like one ...**

**2 Samuel 9:11 "... so Mephibosheth ate at David's table, like one of the King's sons."**

**We go from enemy to sons. [Iodebar to His table] [no pasture to plenty]**

**We don't have a place at the table out of pity. We belong there because we are sons/daughters of God.**

This is the gospel story ... God's grace ... we are given more than we deserve.

Remember this often ... I am Mephibosheth: a dead dog who received grace and mercy and was given a place at the King's table as a son.

**But God's grace doesn't stop there. We are more than just Mephibosheth in this story.**

And this important to realize as well.

Often we get stuck in the identity of Mephibosheth. Enemy turned son feasting at the King's table.

**We are like a coin with two sides.**

On one side of the coin is the picture of Mephibosheth.

But there is another side of the coin and is essential for understanding the fullness of our Gospel identity.

Again, we are not David...if you thought that is where we are going. Sorry! ☺

No, there is a role so ordinary and assumed it easily gets overlooked.

It's a role none of us like to play because it doesn't have names mentioned or accolades given to it.

David opened his table to Mephibosheth. Every night he could eat at the King's table.

**Let me ask you a question. How did Mephibosheth get there? Who made the food and set the table?**

It doesn't say... BUT! we know...

It was the king's servants. A nameless group of people that carried out what was in the King's heart.

**That is the other side of the coin. We are not only Mephibosheth's that have a place at the King's tables and eat with him as a son.**

**Identity #2: You Are Jesus' Servants That Are Called To Set The Kings Table.**

**We don't want this all to ourselves. We want everyone to experience the King's table.**

As Spurgeon once quipped ... "I will not believe that you have tasted of the honey of the gospel if you can eat it all by yourself."

**As Christians we are called to leverage our lives and everything we have to do this.  
We get to create environments where the King's heart is put on display to be seen and experienced.**

Think about it...

Your home / dining room table ... is one of the most effective Gospel assets you have as a Christian.

**STORY: [Me 16 // early morning // Danny convo] → my home = safe, different**

The Christianity that spread throughout the book of Acts largely happened in the home.

Take advantage of that gift God has given you, and use it for his glory.

**Another place is right here on a Sunday. This is God's house. This is the King's table.**

I am not the only Mephibosheth coming to eat at the King's table this Sunday. We all are!

**BUT!!!!** We also come as the king's servants who make the King's house a welcome and inviting place.

**Are we leveraging what God has given us with to reach the Mephibosheth's all around us?**

You don't have to go far to look for them...look around this room/your office/ your school.

Everyone around you just might be a Mephibosheth God is calling you to bring to his table.

**You can open your home/hearts/lives to receive them.**

- **It can be lunches, dinners, coffees during the week.**
- **It can be through hosting community groups.**
- **Serving on Sundays**

## **PAUSE**

**If you are anything like me you've realized there is a cost to this.**

That is true...

**Loving others will always cost us something... [Good Samaritan -- time, money]**

Setting the king's table will always cost us something...

It will mess up our schedules...it takes up our time...

**"I have to wake up 45 minutes earlier to get to church to serve... SHEESH!!!"**

It will make us prioritize what is most important...which might mean we got to cut some things out of our life because we are committed to "setting the King's table".

## **PAUSE**

Imagine being the King's servants...

Mephibosheth just made their job harder not easier.

People had to carry him to and from the king's table. They had to make extra food for him. There were extra dishes to wash.

That's the thing ... there is a real cost to living this out.

## STORIES:

- **Seen you guys give rides to ppl w/o cars so they could come to church.**
- **Winslow ... when we first started HVK ... setup chairs on Saturday night ... volunteered.**
- **OTIS: Single mom's with baby carriers ...**

It's hard not to look at people and see problems.  
But Jesus never sees us as problems.  
He sees us as people to love.

## What is our King's heart?

Jesus' heart was seen in his ministry on earth. He moved into the neighborhood and walked among us. He moved toward problem people: lepers, lame, sick.

## He moved toward you and me didn't he?

Jesus' heart hasn't changed. His heart of love toward people is made known through his servants.

He has plenty of space at His table.  
And he is always making room for more.

This year is a new year.  
New beginnings.  
New chapter in the life of our church.

Up to now we've had the joy and privilege of being hosted by CPBC.  
But that is coming to a close.

We've maximized this space well.  
We've set the kings table.  
And Jesus has been faithful to fill it.

### **[ASK FOR CHAIR]**

I imagine David calling in a carpenter and saying, "build another chair to add to my table."

"One more for Mephibosheth."

We've always trusted that God will not only bring the increase, but will provide the room.

I don't want us to ever get to the place where we are saying, "God, please don't bring anymore."

### **PAUSE**

Here is our situation as a church ...  
We've been maxing out this room // km // parking.  
[ no vacancy ]

We have 2 options:

- stay here and turn people away, OR
- move to a bigger place

We've prayed to God for direction and sought out buildings for our next move.

The staff, your pastors, Donnie and the broader elder team, all feel right in Holy Spirit that our next stage in the journey is to start meeting in the Tourist and Event Center.



Now, that is going to mean some changes.

We won't have as nice KM facilities as we used to.  
We won't have 100 year old tobacco barn wood backdrop.

There will be more setup and tear down to do.

Yes, we lose some perks, and pick up some work.

**But ... we also get more space for more Mephibosheth's. [that's exciting!]**

It might take a little more effort to set the King's table in this next venue ... but that is the place God is leading us.

Some of you might be feeling a little skeptical.

"This feels like a step backward."

"We are losing some of the stuff we had going for us."

**But let me ask you this ... "What do we put our hope in?"**

David had to take Saul's armor off before he fought Goliath. Armor made the most sense. It was conventional battle tactics.

But God's ways are often weak and foolish and confusing.

This is the story of OH. We've done all the stuff your not suppose to do to grow a church ... but God keeps adding.

I can't tell you why God is leading us this way.  
I can't promise you how this will work out in the end.

But this I do know.

We will never stop proclaiming Jesus as King.

We will never stop proclaiming that we were a bunch of dead dogs who the King restored and now we get to eat at his table as his kids.

AND we will never stop joyfully setting the King's table.

**[BAND COME UP]**

## **PRACTICALS**

If everything goes according to plan our first Sunday will likely be February 16.

That gives us 6 weeks to prepare.

There are two big needs:

- commitments to serve
- paying for new KM and sound equipment: \$60K

Sunday, Jan 19th will be the day you can sign up to serve and give.

Until then, we ask that you pray about your serving commitment and what God is putting on your heart to give.

I'm sure there is a ton more questions you might have.

I'll be hanging around after the service if you want to talk.

**Before we close, I want to get us back to why we are even having this conversation.**

Jesus died to give us a place at his table.

As we come to take communion, at his table, we are reminded of that fact.

If you aren't a Christian ...  
I invite you to put your faith in Jesus today.

**PRAY**