
Sermon Text Discussion Notes 04/14/2019

2 Samuel 23:8-24:25 – “In the Hands of a Merciful God” by Drew Hunter

Overview

At first glance, these final two chapters seem to be a strange way to end 2 Samuel. However, when we think about David’s legacy, this last story succinctly highlights two consistent realities throughout David’s life: David often sinned boldly, but he also quickly repented. David intimately saw the offensiveness of his sin before God. And he acutely understood the immense kindness of God. This final story highlights once more the severity and the mercy of God. It shows us that God’s wrath is our greatest problem, and that God’s mercy is our greatest hope.

1. Why the List? (23:8-39)
2. What’s the Problem? (24:1-9)
3. Why the Judgment? (24:10-15)
4. Where’s the Mercy? (24:16-25)

Quotations

“God exceeds our understanding; we cannot confine God to what we can figure out about him... [This story] prevents us from reducing God to what we expect or understand of God. It keeps us alert and receptive to divine mystery. It shakes us out of our cultural preconceptions. It stands in the way of distilling the bible into predictable moralizing anecdotes. God will not fit into our idea of how we think God should act. But if we stay with the story long enough (*i.e. all the way to Jesus*) we find that God is more, not less, better, not worse than what we expect” – Eugene Peterson

Understanding & Application

- 1) Read 2 Sam. 24:1-9. What is the problem with David’s census?
- 2) Read 2 Sam. 24:10-25.
What do you find striking about God’s display of wrath in these verses?
And how does that compare to the expressions of God’s mercy in these verses?
How does this story connect with and look forward to the sacrificial death of Jesus?
- 3) Eugene Peterson’s quote challenges us to lean in and find encouragement in truths about God that can be difficult to understand or appreciate. To see that God is not worse than we think, but better.
Where are you at in processing the relationship between God’s sovereignty and David’s responsibility as described in this passage? Are you encouraged? Frustrated? Confused? Something else? Why?
Consider looking at Ex. 9:12-16, 1 Chron. 21:1-8, Acts 4:27-28, or Phil. 2:12-13.
- 4) God’s Spirit frequently brings one particular truth or emphasis to our mind as we sit under the preaching of his Word. Take a moment to reflect on the main truth God wanted you to hear on Sunday (consider using one of the three questions below to help guide you).
How are you worshiping God afresh?
What area of darkness has God exposed with the light of his truth?
How are you provoked to live more intentionally with others?
Now, take time and share with your group how God spoke to you through his Word **and** how this one thing changes how you will live tomorrow (be specific).