

God Is Looking for A Man—Will He Find You?

Just like the Marines are looking for a few good men, so is God. He is looking for men after His heart who will do what He wants them to do. “I have found David son of Jesse,” the Bible tells us, “a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do” (Acts 13:22, NIV). The “I” in that passage is God. What’s interesting about this Scripture is that it starts with “I have *found* David.” That means God was looking. He was looking not just for any man but for a man after His own heart who would do His will.

Authentic Manhood

I don’t know about you, but at the end of my life, that’s how I want to be remembered. Really, nothing else matters. More than being a good man, I want to be a “God” man. That’s what real manhood is all about. It’s quite possible to be a good man and not be a “God” man.

Authentic manhood is about the heart—God’s heart. A man can know God’s heart. Let that sink in. David was a warrior-king who knew incredible victories as well as heartbreaking defeats. He knew God in the wilderness when shepherding sheep with vicious predators stalking them and when he slew the giant warrior-champion Goliath. He knew God when hiding out in the caves of Adullam and when reigning in the palace. He experienced euphoric spiritual highs, yet he fell to the lowest, deepest pits of sin, despair and self-loathing. He had loyal kids who adored him and kids who wanted him dead. David’s life ran the full gamut of ups and downs, joys and sorrows. As a warrior-king he was responsible for much bloodshed (1 Chron. 22:8).

David also fell into adultery with Bathsheba. Then, after

discovering she was pregnant, he arranged for her husband, Uriah, to be put into a vulnerable battle position, which led to Uriah's death (2 Sam. 11:2-17). Against God's law, David had multiple wives (Deut. 17:17, 2 Sam. 3:2-5). Because of his reckless fathering, his family suffered inner conflict and misfortune (2 Sam. 13:10-22, 28-32, 18:33).

In addition, David disobeyed God's command to number his military after God specifically told him not to. The result was 70,000 of his people perishing in a plague (2 Sam. 24:10-15).

All of the above is true, yet three consistent themes ran throughout David's life. Three things never changed.

David was fully man with feet of clay that were marred and cracked.

David loved God.

David knew God.

The obvious questions I'm sure many of you are asking are "How could this be? How can a man love God and sin like that, and how can God bless a man with that kind of sin?" I am certainly not excusing David's actions. Neither is God. David also knew true sorrow and repentance for his sin and failures. Author Jim George wrote in his book *A Man After God's Own Heart*:

How could God possibly commend a man with this kind of background? Yes, David was a man with feet of clay, a man who at times committed sins that most of us could not imagine, let alone commit. Yet over the long haul, David sought to be righteous, and his heart's desire was to do God's will. This is the kind of man God was looking for as indicated by Jeremiah 5:1 (NIV): "Go up and down the streets of Jerusalem, look around and consider, search through her squares. If you can find but one person who deals honestly and seeks the truth, I will forgive this city." God doesn't expect perfection, as we can clearly see from David. With all that

David had done wrong in his life, God could still look at David's heart and say he was a man after His own heart—a man who did all God's will.

"If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?" penned David. "But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared" (Ps. 130:3-4, ESV). I love that, and I want that. David knew that righteousness, like Abraham's, could come only through faith in God's mercy. He understood and looked forward to the coming Messiah.

David also wrote, "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy" (Ps. 147:11, KJV). David knew God when he was disciplined by Him, and then he found cleansing and forgiveness. It's possible to know God, love Him deeply, and still fail Him miserably. That was David. That is us.

Yet he was a man after God's own heart. God found him, but David chased after God to do His will. "As the deer pants for the water brooks," wrote David, "so my soul pants for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God" (Ps. 42:1-2, NASB).

Even though David is not named as the author of Psalm 42, scholars conclude it is from his hand. It is Davidic in nature and maintains the elements of his style. The point is that God is looking for men who thirst and pant for Him, men who will step forward in those God moments, men who will rise up and do His will.

Prove Yourself a Man

Around 970 B.C., as David's time on earth drew to a close, there was so much he could say, so many truths to convey before passing the baton of leadership to Solomon, his son. Solomon was waiting by his father's side, listening, grieving and knowing time with him was limited. Father to son, David began with "I go the way of all the earth; be strong,

therefore, and prove yourself a man" (1 Kings 22, NKJV).

The giant slayer, the warrior-king, and the man after God's own heart, David knew that effective leadership began with the foundation of being a man. Yet the type of manhood he was talking about didn't simply happen as a result of testosterone and perhaps the ability to wield a sword. King Saul, who reigned before David, possessed all of that, but he was not a man after God's heart. He had the physical stature and was charismatic, handsome and a great warrior, but he let his ego, pride and self-sufficiency lead to his fall. Saul had many toxic characteristics and behaviors that were not repented of and submitted to God.

David, on the other hand, was talking to his son Solomon about manhood that was to be demonstrated and proven by godly character. In short, proving himself a man meant Solomon was to embrace God's definition of manhood and to be strong in the face of adversity.

David knew what was coming. He understood that Israel's many enemies, from without and within, would be launching full frontal attacks against them. Solomon would need to man up by making godly choices. To lead efficiently, he needed to see his source was God, not his own strength. Solomon's brother Absalom sadly went the same route as Saul. He trusted in his ego and brute strength instead of in God. Absalom was a high-strung, rebellious man who thought too highly of himself. Narcissistic at his core, he was ruled by his elevated sense of self and thoughts of grandeur and power. He even had a monument erected to honor himself. In the end Absalom wound up swinging by his hair from a tree limb, wide open to his opponent's attack (2 Sam. 18:1-8).

How many men today are lost in and trapped by their own egos and behaviors, leaving themselves wide open and vulnerable to the enemy's attacks? David understood that as Israel's new leader, Solomon would need to take a stand, leading the people

in keeping God's ways. His leadership of Israel, however, had to begin with his own personal integrity before God. David's deathbed exhortation to his son continued: "And keep the charge of the Lord your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn" (1 Kings 2:3, NKJV).

According to David, Solomon proving himself a man and being an effective leader started with embracing God's plan and walking in His ways. David related authentic manhood to serving God. That's big. The same is true today. For men to impact the culture around them and their circles of influence, starting with their families, they must embrace God's true definition of manhood and masculinity. You don't have to accept mainstream media's or some liberal organization's label of who you are, and you certainly don't have to accept the mischaracterized version of traditional masculinity—but instead you must accept the absolute truth of what God's Word says about you.

Oswald Sanders wrote, "When God does discover a man who conforms to His spiritual requirement, who is willing to pay the full price of discipleship, He uses him to the limit, despite his patent shortcomings."

The great need of our culture today is not for more men of talent or more men of success but for more men of character with hearts that follow hard after God. Our culture needs men who have taken up David's challenge to Solomon to "be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man" and who understand what that means. Yes, God is looking for a man. Will He find you?

This is an adapted excerpt from Take It Back: Reclaiming Biblical Manhood for the Sake of Marriage, Family, and Culture by Dr. Tim Clinton and Max Davis. Copyright ©2020 Published by Charisma House. Used by permission.