

The Devotion Of David

Introduction. Devotion is an internal quality that motivates and regulates external conduct. Nothing that is said here should be taken to mean that we should feel less concern for external compliance with God's word, but this lesson will emphasize that without devotion, whatever we might do externally would be unacceptable to God. The Greek word for devout is *eulabes* which means "taking hold well, primarily, cautious; signifies in the New Testament, careful as to the realization of the presence and claims of God; reverencing God, pious, devout."

We must keep in mind that in the mingled fear and love which constitutes the devotion of man toward God, the Old Testament emphasizes fear, and the New Testament emphasizes love (though there was love in the fear of God's saints then, as there must be fear in their love now). The idea behind the word devotion is like Zacharias and Elizabeth who "were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (Luke 1:6). They left nothing willingly undone in regard to their duties.

The purpose of this lesson is to encourage each of us to examine our own service to God. Is it a heartless, cold, formal service and worship performed because it is required, or does our conduct reveal a heart that is really devoted to God? The best way to tell something is to see it, so we will look at the life of David and see his devotion demonstrated time and time again.

I. ***David's Devotion To God Is Evident Early In His Life***

- A. While David was a youth he was anointed to be the new king over Israel at Saul's death. David's life at this point mimicked the Lord's from His humble submission in a lowly calling, His faithful discharge of a menial task, and His subjection to His parents. After a time, Jesse asked David to go to the battle area and check on his brothers. Upon arriving, he found a distressing situation. Goliath, a Philistine over nine feet tall, would come out every day and defy the Israelite army by challenging them to pick out a man to fight him. The Israelites were terrified, but David was not afraid (1 Samuel 17:32).
- B. David then related how he had been able to kill both a lion and a bear that had threatened his sheep, and the same God that had provided that deliverance would deliver him out of the hand of Goliath. When the hour of action came, David was able to call upon his faith in God to deliver him from the Philistine (1 Samuel 17:45).
- C. Not only did this show David's deep devotion to God, but it also demonstrated his ability to lead the children of Israel as their king (1 Samuel 18:16). David's devotion shows us how important it is to build

our faith in our children when they are young. If they have a good, strong base by being raised to be Christians, they will not fall away when the pressures of sin begin to mount (1 Samuel 2:26; Psalm 71:17-18).

II. ***David's Devotion To God Is Evident In His Respect For The Sacred***

- A. David's attitude toward Saul is one of the most impressive examples of his respect for the sacred. After David killed Goliath, Saul became insanely jealous. He made several attempts to kill David but David never retaliated. Later David had to flee to the wilderness of Engedi to protect himself from Saul. Saul then went looking for him with 3,000 chosen men and on one occasion went to rest in a cave already occupied by David and his men. David had the chance, but he would not harm Saul because Saul was sacred to God (1 Samuel 24:10).
- B. David had a deep regard for God's truth, as was shown in his charge to Solomon (1 Kings 2:2-3), and from a small sampling of his psalms.
 - 1. From what is seen everyday by all the world, David leads us to the consideration of the invisible things of God who is incontestably evident and glory shines bright in the heavens (Psalms 19:1-6).
 - 2. Psalm 23 is one of the most beloved psalms of all time and it shows a heart which overflows in devotion to God. He resolutely clings to God, and encourages us from his experiences of God's goodness.
 - 3. In Psalm 27:1, David triumphs in God. He is the epitome of devotion and ardent dedication to God. We know these words were penned by inspiration, but as you look at David's life you know that these psalms expressed the sentiments of his soul.
 - 4. Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible, and in those 176 verses, God's word is mentioned in all but five. Several statements are highly cherished, showing David's respect for God's word (89, 104-105).
- C. How many of us have the kind of respect that is necessary toward what God says is sacred? How many of us have lived up to Paul's charge to Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:11-16? How many of us have this kind of spirituality? We need to know arguments in the scriptures and we need depth in our relationship with God. It seems almost taboo to talk about deep spiritual matters with brethren anymore. People's spirituality seems to be a mile wide and an inch deep. Is your religion a passion or a pastime? True depth can be found in seeing worship as the most important activity in your life (Psalm 27:4).

III. ***David's Devotion To God Is Evident In His Willingness To Repent***

- A. Repentance, by nature, must spring from a heart devoted to God. Repentance is a change of mind regarding sin, and sin is a violation of

divine law (1 John 3:4). Without a proper regard for the author of the law, there could be no change of heart when the law is broken. No person lives above sin (1 John 1:8), and David was no exception.

- B. The best known of David's infractions was his affair with Bathsheba. In that episode, which scholars say may have extended over a period of a year, David broke at least five of the Ten Commandments. He lusted for and coveted his neighbor's wife (#10), he committed adultery (#7), he attempted to bear false witness to Uriah (#9), he stole another man's wife (#8), and he murdered her husband (#6).
- C. But David had three advantages. First, he had someone in heaven who loved him; second, he had a prophet who was willing to tell him the truth about his spiritual condition; and, third, he had a conscience that was devoted to God. God was displeased with him (2 Samuel 11:27). The words of Nathan must have hit him like a sledgehammer (2 Samuel 12:7-12), and David confessed his sin (2 Samuel 12:13).
- D. Psalm 51 was probably written by David following the sin with Bathsheba. David could have offered animal sacrifices to the day of his death to no avail, but with a heart broken by a knowledge of his violation of God's law, he could then approach God through the means provided under the law of Moses (Psalm 51:15-17; cf. Matthew 5:3).
- E. Every sin is a tragedy of immense proportions, but the tragedy becomes an eternal one when we refuse to repent (Hebrews 6:4-6). Any person who believes it is impossible to repent has lost their devotion to God. They no longer stand in awe of God, no longer has a dread of displeasing Him, and no longer recognizes His claims on their life. David never lost his ability to repent (cf. 2 Samuel 24:10); regardless of what he did, he always had the desire to be restored to God's fellowship.

Conclusion. The writer of the Hebrew letter uses a form of the word *eulabes* and it sums up what we have tried to say in this lesson on the devotion of David. In Hebrews 5:7, the godly fear of Jesus enabled Him to willingly turn everything over to God. In Hebrews 11:7, Noah prepared the ark because he was "moved with fear." His faith and devotion in God motivated him to give his life to a project that was as opposite to common sense as anything possibly could have been. But all those who observed his preaching and building could see his devotion. Finally, in Hebrews 12:28, our task is to "serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." All of this definitively shows that devotion is an absolute necessity to serving God.