

Reformation Sunday

October 25,2020

2 Samuel 7:1-17

The scripture lesson this morning is another story of grace. The story focuses on how God pours out His grace upon David and how he does not fully grasp the concept. Sometimes there is a lot of David in many of us. This certainly seems to be a constant theme in our relationship with God. Most of the time we do not fully understand the expressions of God's grace. When we have a loose understanding of grace, that is when we distort it and abuse it to justify our situation.

In order to understand grace as it appears in the Old Testament sometimes it is best to deconstruct it with the New Testament. The reverse also holds true but in a different way. Jesus Christ is the expression of God's fullest grace. We can use Our Lord's ministry amongst us to help unpack and understand the Old Testament. He cured, healed 'cleansed and raised the dead as an expression of love for His Father's creation. Never asking for anything in return. This brings us back to David and his issue.

David's dilemma this morning revolves around his desire and need to pay God back. What could David have that God could want in payment? God does not expect or want payback from David for all He has done for him. God has provided David with a stable, permanent and secure place to live. However the Ark of the Covenant, which is the presence of God amongst the Jews, is housed in an impermanent and flimsy tent. David is feeling guilty for his great conditions God provided

for him. The symbolism here is beautiful. God does not need a permanent man made structure to be contained in. God is everywhere. That is what the tent represents. It can be taken anywhere. The Babylonians proved that when they sacked Jerusalem. Now if you are feeling cheeky and want to watch grace flow, use do random acts of kindness where ever you can. Watch the confused Davidic looks on people's faces as they try to figure out how to repay you. There is no repayment required or expected, it is grace, just say thank you.

What remains unclear is David's motivations that are driven by his emotions. These motivations whatever they may be are authentically human. It raises the question is David genuine in his attempt to pay God back for giving him rest and establishing him as king. Or is there possibly more. Does David want to build God a temple with the hope that God will do even greater things for him? All the questions about David's motivation reveals that he does not fully understand the nature of God's grace. That is a good question to ask ourselves. I think grace is best not explained in human terms, but experienced with a simple faith. When we try to explain it or understand it we run the risk of confusing or abusing it.

God's grace to David is an unmerited gift. It is something we do not deserve or expect. That is what makes it a gift. Sometimes the hard part is being humble enough to say thank you. God's grace does not change over time. It is always there and will continue to flow. The only thing that changes are the situations and our experience of it. The centuries may separate us from David but we are shoulder to shoulder with him. David does not need to do something to pay God back. The beautiful part of the story is that God makes it abundantly clear to David that His grace will continue. Sometimes saying thank you or an

act of thanksgiving would be repayment enough. It is a beautiful reminder that God's grace in our lives will continue to flow also. That we need to be open and aware to God's grace in our lives. This is a humbling experience. The greater we let grace flow, the more grace filled our lives become. Being aware and experiencing God's grace in our lives makes us humble. This tempers our ego which makes it easier to give our lives to Him. Can you ever have too much grace in your life.

The Old Testament provides a context in order to understand the riches of grace contained in the New Testament. Mostly in the person of Jesus Christ. For two thousand years the people of God experienced His gracious acts. The Old Testament helps us to understand the importance of the humanity of Our Lord. He was one of us. The prophecies of Isaiah and Micha tell us as much. The Old Testament provide the context for receiving the Christ and the grace that He gives to humanity. Heb 1:1-2, "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets: but in these last days He has spoken to us by a Son."

God Bless and stay healthy and safe, Pastor D