

sermon study guide

Speaker: Pastor Ashwin Ramani

Date: October 10/11 2020

Sermon Title: Battling Entitlement (Thanksgiving Sermon 2020)

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. Share a commercial that uses a very clever and persuasive argument to tell you that “You deserve this.” What are some of the more subtle ways that we fall into the trap of entitlement that the world offers?
2. How do you practice a lifestyle of gratitude? Do you set aside time during the day to ‘count your blessings’? Keep a gratitude journal?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read 2 Samuel 7:18-29

3. David endured much and achieved much through his life from shepherd to king. As David reflects on his life through this prayer, he uses phrases such as “Who am I?”, “Sovereign Lord”, “Your servant”. How do these and other words/phrases reveal David’s character and where his focus is?
4. What words or phrases from this prayer reveal God’s character and His bigger plans?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. How do you react/respond when God says ‘No’ or ‘Not yet’ to your prayers, dreams or expectations?
6. King David practiced gratitude by reflecting on:
 - his ‘unmerited blessings’, leading to humility
 - God’s character, leading to worship
 - God’s purposes, leading to trust

Which of these do you need to weave into your life this coming week? Where is God calling you to be an ‘unmerited blessing’ in someone else’s life?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Pastor Ashwin said that we are God’s ‘trophy’. He said, “When you look at a trophy you don’t just admire the trophy but the person behind it. For a trophy represents something - it represents the greatness of someone who won the cup. So in the same way our lives as Christians speak of God’s greatness. We are reflectors of His splendor and glory.” What does it mean to you to be God’s ‘trophy’ and for his glory to be reflected in you?

THE WORD (NIV)

2 Samuel 7:18-29

¹⁸Then King David went in and sat before the Lord, and he said:

“Who am I, Sovereign Lord, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? ¹⁹And as if this were not enough in your sight, Sovereign Lord, you have also spoken about the future of the house of your servant—and this decree, Sovereign Lord, is for a mere human!^a

²⁰“What more can David say to you? For you know your servant, Sovereign Lord. ²¹For the sake of your word and according to your will, you have done this great thing and made it known to your servant.

²²“How great you are, Sovereign Lord! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears. ²³And who is like your people Israel—the one nation on earth that God went out to redeem as a people for himself, and to make a name for himself, and to perform great and awesome wonders by driving out nations and their gods from before your people, whom you redeemed from Egypt?^b ²⁴You have established your people Israel as your very own forever, and you, Lord, have become their God.

²⁵“And now, Lord God, keep forever the promise you have made concerning your servant and his house. Do as you promised, ²⁶so that your name will be great forever. Then people will say, ‘The Lord Almighty is God over Israel!’ And the house of your servant David will be established in your sight.

²⁷“Lord Almighty, God of Israel, you have revealed this to your servant, saying, ‘I will build a house for you.’ So your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. ²⁸Sovereign Lord, you are God! Your covenant is trustworthy, and you have promised these good things to your servant. ²⁹Now be pleased to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever in your sight; for you, Sovereign Lord, have spoken, and with your blessing the house of your servant will be blessed forever.”

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sermon study summary

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Can we be thankful in the midst of a pandemic? Concerns about health, economy, and living in isolation seem to increase every day. How about some good news for a change?

We all have legitimate concerns, but at the heart, there is an attitude that is raising its ugly head – entitlement. It describes our time. It is widespread, across cultures and especially in western society: “I deserve better. I don’t need to put up with such inconveniences. I get what I want.” To celebrate Thanksgiving, we need to battle against this attitude of entitlement.

We are going to look at King David, who responded in worship even when God said no. David intended to build a temple for God, a plan at first confirmed through Nathan the prophet but later denied by God. Not David, but his son Solomon would build the temple. How did David respond? Did David fall into an attitude of entitlement? His response in 2 Sam 7:18-29 reveals three ways to battle entitlement:

1. David Reflected on his Unmerited Blessings

In v. 18 David asks “Who am I, Sovereign Lord, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?” In a world of entitlement that believes, “I deserve this because I am so and so, me and my family are very important” it is refreshing to read David’s prayer. David knew his story, where he started, the journey he had taken. He began as a shepherd in Bethlehem and became the king of Israel in Jerusalem. David knew very well that this was not by hard work nor was it a testimony to human achievement. It was only by the grace of God!

Reflecting on unmerited blessings is the key to humility. Praise belongs to God, not me – not to us but to Your name be the glory! David reflected on his unmerited blessings. It led to humility and gratitude.

2. David Reflected on God’s Character

The problem with entitlement is that we place ourselves on a pedestal. Meditating and reflecting on God’s character puts us in the right place. David refers to God as Sovereign Lord seven times in his prayer. In v. 22 David says “there is no God like you”, leading David to a deep sense of wonder and awe, which resulted in worship.

We reflect God’s splendor and glory as God’s prized possession and trophy. God is Sovereign – He is in control – He is trustworthy. Reflect on God’s unchanging character and let it lead you to a profound sense of worship.

3. David Reflected on God’s Purposes

In v. 27 David thought of building a house for God, but God said no – You are not building me a house, I am going to build you a house. This was a prophetic reference to Jesus the King, who came in David’s lineage to establish God’s Kingdom rule. God’s plan involved the salvation of the world. Because God’s promises are reliable and trustworthy – David believed them. Reflecting on God’s purposes leads to trust.

So, let us fix our eyes on these truths to help us in all circumstances: Humility, Worship and Trust.