

Love Your Family
2 Samuel 9:1-7
Arise to follow the Lord today.

Has the summer been a time of spiritual progress or malaise?

You are in Jerusalem, David's new capital city. God prefers that, rather than building the Lord's house, David set himself to building up his own home by becoming a good father and husband. Rejecting the Lord's calling, David lays the groundwork for trouble.

Pray that the Lord draws you out of sloth to embrace the kingly mission he has given you. Pray for the grace of freedom and humility for all Exodus Men, just as they are praying for you.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair, lust for power, and idle chatter. Instead, bestow on me, your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience, and love. Yes, O Lord and King, let me see my own sins and not judge my brothers and sisters; for you are blessed forever and ever. Amen.

A Reading from the Second Book of Samuel

And David said, "Is there still any one left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David; and the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" And he said, "Your servant is he." And the king said, "Is there not still some one of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?" Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet." The king said to him, "Where is he?" And Ziba said to the king, "He is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar." Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar. And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David, and fell on his face and did obeisance. And David said, "Mephibosheth!" And he answered, "Behold, your servant." And David said to him, "Do not fear; for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father; and you shall eat at my table always."

Reflection

David had made a covenant with Jonathan that he would treat his kin with kindness and not cut them off when he became king. It took David a long while, and it did not seem to occur to him that Michal was someone he could have shown mercy, but nonetheless, on this day, he becomes a great exemplar of divine kindness toward Mephibosheth, who posed a significant threat to his rule.

While David's kindness to Mephibosheth is certainly gracious, it is significant that David looks for someone outside his household rather than Michal. One of the ways sloth works is in keeping us from loving those

closest to us. We will go to great lengths to help, impress, and serve new friends and strangers, while neglecting our family. It is hard to love those nearest to us. When we are at home, we want to relax, and yet home life so regularly demands more from us than our jobs. We also have expectations of others that often go unmet, making us feel unloved. There are historical wounds that keep us from becoming vulnerable again.

Love is hard work. And it is easy to substitute friendship with others for love for family. Sloth settles in when we neglect our families because we find love and self-denial for them too difficult. We have to wonder what our children think when they see us bending over backwards to help a neighbor, while not cutting their mother any slack. And, indeed, surely people in David's household took notice of his chronic neglect of Michal while he enriches Mephibosheth.

Do you find yourself neglecting your family while serving friends or others? Do you find it easy to make excuses for not loving and serving your spouse and children when you are given the opportunity? Listen, in prayer today, to what the Lord has for you on this topic.

Now place yourself before God, and converse with him.

Week 5 Action Items

Bookend your day with a morning offering and nightly examen.

Check in with your anchor.

Don't give in to distractions.

Invite men to join your fraternity for Kings of Summer, Part 2.