

David's Spiritual Secret

David's Epitaph--God's Servant

Acts 13:36

One of the most fascinating branches of history is the study of tomb inscriptions. Most famous among these are the Pharaohs and their pyramids and their gilded remains among intricate inscriptions hidden away among the rock hewn tombs in the Valley of the Kings.

What would you like to have written on your tombstone? When people remember your life and mine—what would we like for them to remember?

What's really interesting is, God wrote many epitaphs, memories of what the life that was lived was all about. Hebrews 11 is a chapter filled with monuments to lives lived for God that pleased Him.

ep-i-taph [noun] Definitions: 1. **inscription on a tombstone**: an inscription on a tombstone or monument commemorating the person buried there; 2. **speech or writing commemorating a dead person**: a short speech or piece of writing celebrating the life of a recently deceased person.

If God sent down and order to write out an inscription to the monument company—what would He send? God epitaph for David is written down in Acts 13. I invite you to the marker that captures and entire life lived on planet earth. And in 9 words God sums up what a servant is all about. This is what I like to call **David's Spiritual Secret!**

Please open to Acts 13:36.

*Acts 13:36 "For when **David had served God's purpose in his own generation**, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed.*
NIV

Who will be in Heaven? God's Servants.

And what does Paul in the New Testament and David in the Old Testament have in common? Both called themselves God's servants and both looked on life as serving God, and the end of life as having finished their course of service for Him.

So, whose life is considered important to God? Well, who did God chose to write more about than any other single person in the whole history of the world? The answer is the young man we met this morning.

David was “God-hearted” which meant he served God’s purposes. The word “served” is the verb form (**hupereteo**) of the word for an under rower (**huperetes**) that we have often studied as a model of how to serve the Lord.

David was under God’s command, he did what the Lord asked him to do, willingly unseen and obscure—always wanting the Lord to get all the glory. A simpler way to say that is—David was God’s servant all his days. No wonder Paul uses the very same concept to describe his own life and ministry.

What is a person’s life like when they are committed to being God’s servant? God wants to explain that to us! First--

1. **David’s life was on God's mind.** *God uses the unchangeable features of servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16: 11*
2. **David’s life was disciplined.** *God uses the disciplined lives of servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16: 12a*
3. **David’s life was available for God to use.** *God uses the available lives of servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16: 12b*
4. **David’s life was empowered by the Lord.** *God uses His Spirit to empower servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16: 13*
5. **David’s life was an example of godliness to others.** *God uses the actions of servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16: 18*
6. **David’s life displayed true humility.** *God uses humble servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16: 19*
7. **David’s life ministered to others.** *God uses the ministry of servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16: 23*
8. **David wanted to honor God with his work.** *God is glorified by diligent working servants. 1 Samuel 17: 1; 34-35*
9. **David wanted to honor God with his habits.** *God is either honored or dishonored by the habits of His servants. 1 Samuel 17: 20*
10. **David wanted to honor God with his life.** *God wants us as His servants to give our lives back to Him. 1 Samuel 17: 25-26*

Now look with me at the rest of the elements of a servant’s life that God wants us to see.

DAVID WANTED TO MAGNIFY GOD'S HAND IN HIS LIFE

God is honored when His servants remember His Hand in their lives.

*1 Samuel 17:36-37 "Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God."37 Moreover David said, "**The Lord, who delivered me** from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, **He will deliver me** from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you!"*

When David is asked to talk about himself by King Saul, and explain the biggest qualifications he can think of for the job of facing Goliath—what does David say? He tells the king that his greatest accomplishments came from the Hand of God. Do you see the Hand of God in your life? Do you tell others about what God is doing in your life? We should because-- *God is honored when His servants remember His Hand in their lives.*

DAVID WANTED TO HONOR GOD'S NAME

God is glorified when we honor His Name.

*1 Samuel 17:45-46 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you **in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.**"46 "This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, **that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.***

Our world has marginalized God. The True and Living God who created everything and upholds all things is slowly being erased from the public life of our world. His truth is minimalized, His Word is neglected, His people are ignored. All that He asks of us is one thing—magnify Him!

DAVID WANTED TO DEDICATE HIS TROPHIES TO THE LORD

God is glorified when His servants dedicate their trophies to Him.

Compare these two verses for an incredible spiritual lesson about what made David tick, and what it was that God wanted so much for us to see in his life.

*1 Samuel 17:54 And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but **he put his armor in his tent.***

But a few years later, where was that very special trophy carefully stowed away? In David's room, on his wall for all to see and point to him as the greatest warrior? No way—he had taken it to the tent of God, the place most associated with the Lord on

planet earth. His treasure was on deposit with God!

*1 Samuel 21:9 So the priest said, "**The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the Valley of Elah, there it is, wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod.** If you will take that, take it. For there is no other except that one here." And David said, "There is none like it; give it to me."*

David took the sword of Goliath, the ultimate trophy of the day—but he didn't take it to show off how great he was. David had started a habit of pointing the glory to God. Any trophy David ever received in all his years of undefeated conquests, he seems to always give back to the Lord as an honor to Him! David was God's servant and so he gave his trophies to God all the way through life. He measured life from God's perspective.

*1 Chronicles 18:11 **King David also dedicated these to the Lord**, along with the silver and gold that he had brought from all these nations—from Edom, from Moab, from the people of Ammon, from the Philistines, and from Amalek. NKJV*

David made this a life long habit. As God gave him great victories, and David was given greater and greater trophies—he just kept giving them back to the Lord. There is no limit to what God will do with a life that keep being given back to Him!

*1 Chronicles 28:9 "As for you, my son Solomon, **know the God of your father, and serve Him** with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever. NKJV*

ONLY ONE LIFE TO OFFER

Probably every one of us in this room have heard the famous life's motto that the great missionary Charles Thomas Studd (1860-1931) lived and died by—

*"Only one life,
'twill soon be past;
and only what's done for Christ—
will last."*

However, few of us realize when it was that he said those words. It was on his deathbed with his precious family gathered around him. He had already told each of his children that he wished he had something to give to them, but he had nothing left. Then he said, "...but I gave it all to Jesus long ago."¹

This spiritual giant actually gave his children more than anyone could imagine. His children had seen their father grow year by year in the Lord. They saw his personal

¹ Elisabeth Elliot, *Passion & Purity*, Fleming Revell, p. 43

devotion to the Word of God. They watched him refined by constant health problems, reoccurring weakness and bouts with intense pain. They had watched his tireless devotion to the Lord that carried their frail dad to the remotest and most dangerous spots on earth—all to share the glorious Gospel of Christ. In the end, every one of his children served the Lord to their last days. They saw and followed the example of his great dedication to God.

When Avis B. Christiansen (1895-1985), the wife of the Vice President of Moody Bible Institute heard these precious words spoken by C.T. Studd at his death, she began to ponder them. A few years later in 1937, she wrote a now famous hymn, "**Only One Life to Offer**". Listen to her reflections that turned into a prayer of devotion to the Lord she also served with all her heart (hymn # 378):

*Only one life to offer--
Jesus, my Lord and King;
Only one tongue to praise Thee
And of Thy mercy sing;*

*Only one heart's devotion--
Savior, O may it be
Consecrated alone to Thy matchless glory,
Yielded fully to Thee.*

*Only this hour is mine, Lord--
May it be used for Thee;
May ev'ry passing moment
Count for eternity;
Souls all about are dying,
Dying in sin and shame;
Help me bring the message of Calv'ry's redemption
In Thy glorious name.*

*Only one life to offer--
Take it, dear Lord, I pray;
Nothing from Thee withholding,
Thy will I now obey;
Thou who hast freely given
Thine all in all for me,
Claim this life for Thine own to be used, my Saviour,
Ev'ry moment for Thee.*

Look at the end of his life, what did David do with all those treasures?

*1 Chronicles 22: 14 Indeed **I have taken much trouble to prepare for the house of the Lord** one hundred thousand talents of gold and one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond measure, for it is so abundant. I have prepared timber and stone also, and you may add to them. NKJV*

*1 Chronicles 29:2-3 Now for the house of my God **I have prepared with all my might:** gold for things to be made of gold, silver for things of silver, bronze for things of bronze, iron for things of iron, wood for things of wood, onyx stones, stones to be set, glistening stones of various colors, all kinds of precious stones, and marble slabs in abundance. 3 Moreover, **because I have set my affection on the house of my God,** I have given to the house of my God, **over and above all that I have prepared** for the holy house, **my own special treasure** of gold and silver: NKJV*

So, are you seeking God while you are young.

You say how do I start? Here's a quick game plan to be like David God's servant.

1. Like David--God's servant, MY life is on God's mind.
2. Like David--God's servant, MY life needs discipline.
3. Like David--God's servant, MY life needs to be available to God for His use.
4. Like David--God's servant, MY life needs to be empowered by the Lord.
5. Like David--God's servant, MY life needs to be an example of godliness
6. Like David--God's servant, MY life needs to display true humility.
7. Like David--God's servant, MY life needs to minister to others.
8. Like David--God's servant, I will honor God with MY work.
9. Like David--God's servant, I will honor God with MY attitude.
10. Like David--God's servant, I will honor God with MY habits.
11. Like David--God's servant, I will honor God with MY life.
12. Like David--God's servant, I will magnify God's hand in MY life.
13. Like David--God's servant, I will honor God's Name with MY mouth.
14. Like David--God's servant, I will dedicate MY life wholly to the Lord.

David's spiritual secret was a heart to serve.

David wanted to serve the Lord.