

The Aftermath of Spiritual Success

1Samuel 17:55 – 18:9

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 1-16-2011

Introduction – there are dangers that can spring from victories

In the passage we read there are two success stories. There is the continuing success story of King Saul. And it really is a pretty phenomenal success story. He was a nobody in chapter 8 who got into the limelight in chapter 9, got hero status in chapter 11 after an unbelievable victory, and who seemed to win battle after battle in the years following. He reminds me of Michael Phelps, a guy who has won more swimming competitions than just about anybody. He has won 16 Olympic medals, and when you include all of the international competitions, he has won 59 medals, including fifty gold, seven silver, and two bronze. Yet Phelps is a man like Saul who has shown times of very poor judgment and he can't seem to shake his marijuana and partying reputation. So Saul is the first person who still appears to be a pretty successful fellow, despite some moral failings.

The second success story is obviously David. He was another unknown figure who quickly got catapulted into celebrity status. Through the remainder of chapter 18 David is going to continue to be a celebrity admired by the whole nation, but by the time we get to the next chapter, he has fallen off the radar of a lot of people. He reminds me of Elaine Breeden, another American swimmer who has made some phenomenal time records, won some medals, but who hasn't won yet at the Olympic games. Actually, that's not entirely true. She did get a silver medal in the preliminary medley relay team. But her testimony is that she wants to win with God more than with man. She said during one interview:

“My faith has grown so much through my involvement in swimming. God is continually teaching me to rely on Him for everything and proving that if I put His Kingdom first, everything else will fall into place. My goal in swimming is to use the gift He has given me to build relationships and minister to teammates.”

Two different kinds of success stories. And when Scripture portrays Saul as a political success but a moral failure, it doesn't imply that Saul could not have repented or changed. He could have gone back to the Gospel and been a different man.

Let me tell you a little story that I ran across about Michael Phelps. I don't watch swimming competitions, but the reason I looked up his name this past week was that I happened to read a USA Today report back in February of 2006 where everyone was puzzling over how poorly he had been doing in his competitions *after* winning the Athens Olympics. You would think that he would be in his best form. And his coach, Bob Bowman, used two phrases to describe what was going on, and those two phrases have stuck with me. He said, "[At worlds] he wasn't in the kind of shape he wanted to be. It takes a long time to deal with the aftermath of success like that." And I thought, that's a curious expression – "the aftermath of *success*"? We hear about the aftermath of catastrophes, hurricanes, and other bad thing, but "the aftermath of success?" Here's a man who has just won several Olympic medals, and the coach says, "It takes a long time to deal with the aftermath of success like that."

But apparently this is pretty common in sports, and it's common in other areas of life. You can be on top, and then start going downhill very quickly because of your responses to the fame. These responses might be pride, cutting yourself some slack, and looking at the past rather than pressing on for the future. A lot of times people become careless after success. Several research articles have shown that extramarital affairs frequently happen after phenomenal success in sports, in business, and in other areas. In fact, commentaries point out that this is exactly what happened to David much later in his life in the Bathsheba incident.

But it is not a foregone conclusion. In the passage we are going to be looking at we will see that the various reactions to David's success could very easily have left him prideful, bitter, off-kilter, or focusing too much on the past. But this did not happen to David. David is a model for handling the aftermath of success in a godly way.

The second phrase that coach Bowman used in his interview was "We're getting back to the basics." He said, "Now, we're consistently progressing to the level of training he did prior to Athens." "We're getting back to the basics..." And getting back to the basics enabled David to continue winning one medal after another (so to speak) in the coming chapters.

And if you need to leave in five minutes, here's the sermon in a nutshell. We need the same grace after we are successful as we do before we are successful. We need to have the same striving for the upward goal, the same burying ourselves in God's grace, the same Scripture memorization

and meditation, the same fellowship of the Spirit, the same life of accountability, and all the other basics that we cling to when things aren't going well. Too frequently Christians let their guard down after success. They think they can make it on their own now. But as we will see in the coming chapters of 1 Samuel, David constantly recognized his need of the basics of grace, forgiveness, and the other basics of Christianity. So let's quickly look at the aftermath for David's success. There were five reactions to David's success that I think are common in human dealings.

I. You will find false friends who want to use you (17:55-58 with 18:2)

The first reaction is that you will find false friends who will pat you on the back and who will want to use you. Athletes certainly find that. Let's read chapter 17, verses 55-58:

1 Samuel 17:55 When Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, "Abner, whose son *is* this youth?" And Abner said, "As your soul lives, O king, I do not know."

That ought to seem extremely strange to you. After all, David has been a very useful help to Saul all the way back in chapter 16. In fact, why don't you turn back to chapter 16? In verse 14 an evil spirit plagues Saul. In verse 18 they tell Saul about David and say that he might be the perfect ticket for playing music to help him through these scary bouts with demons. Look at verse 18: "**Then one of the servants answered and said, 'Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, [so here he has been told about his father] *who is* skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the LORD *is* with him.'**" In verse 19 Saul sends to Jesse to ask him to send his son. Verse 21 says, "**So David came to Saul and stood before him. And he loved him greatly, and he became his armor-bearer.**" In verse 23 David regularly plays music in Saul's court. Then in chapter 17:15 it says that David occasionally returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep. So it is clear that this passage is written in the order in which it occurred. But this again implies that most of the time David was in Saul's court. So what is going on when Saul doesn't know much about David? Let's continue reading in chapter 17, verse 56.

1 Samuel 17:56 So the king said, "Inquire whose son this young man *is*." [So it is clear that Saul has forgotten. Verse 57]

1 Samuel 17:57 Then, as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand.

1 Samuel 17:58 And Saul said to him, “Whose son *are* you, young man?” So David answered, “*I am* the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite.”

Two facts are clear from this passage. The first is that Saul needs this information because he has just very publically promised to give tax exemption to the family of whoever kills Goliath and to give his daughter in marriage to the champion. So Saul needs to find out whose name to put into the decree for tax exemption, and he needs to find out a little bit more about who his relatives are going to be.

But the second fact that is clear is that neither Saul nor Abner remember much of anything about David’s background. We don’t know how many months David has been playing at the palace, but obviously Saul has not been asking David anything about his background, and there has been enough time elapsed that both Saul and Abner forget whom David’s father is. Saul loves what David can do for him, but it is obvious that he doesn’t care about David as a person. Now anyone can forget a person’s name. But this goes way beyond that. David was just another tool to be used in Saul’s court, and when you get to chapter 18, Saul doesn’t ask permission of Jesse anymore. He makes a demand. It says, “**Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father’s house anymore.**” It doesn’t matter that Jesse really needs his son’s services. It doesn’t matter what David wants to go. He doesn’t let him go home.

Saul will be a friend – at least for a while. But he is a friend of David’s only so long as David becomes useful to him. Have you ever had that happen to you? Perhaps you have gotten a promotion at your job, and suddenly you are a guy who can influence other people’s career advances. And they love you; they really love you like Saul did. You are their ticket to success. Or perhaps you have gotten on a powerful political position, and it feels so good to have politicians who like you and befriend you. Or perhaps you are an expert, and everyone needs your expertise.

How do you handle that? I think David is a good example of how to handle that. You accept your new status and position as an act of God’s providence, but you don’t let it get to your head. You faithfully serve your friends, but you don’t put your trust in man. You remain faithful even when your friends are not faithful. David remained faithful to Saul even after Saul had burned him several times. Saul’s user-attitude never rubbed off on David. Trust God even when these false friends are trusting you to come through. Do not let their pats on the backs and promotions keep you from trusting God and clinging to God as your only hope and support. When

everyone else is trusting you, it is easy for you to begin trusting you; and that will be your downfall.

David wrote Psalm 144 right around this period of time, and in that Psalm he acknowledges that God trains his hands for battle, that God alone is His security. And then he says, **“LORD, what is man, that You take knowledge of him? Or the son of man, that You are mindful of him? Man is like a breath; his days are like a passing shadow.”** Though people are treating him as a hero, he reminds himself that he is like a breath that will pass away, and without God He can do nothing. But he also reminds himself that he can do all things through God, and it is God whom he is primarily serving. Yes, Saul thinks David is serving Saul, but David is really serving God when he is serving Saul. And that is what made David such an asset for the kingdom. And on your own I think you can dig deeper into the applications. Ask, “How have I related to false friends? Have I related to them in a Biblical way?”

II. You will find true friends who become kindred spirits (18:1,3-4)

A second part of the immediate aftermath of David’s success was that he found true friends who would stick by him. So there are false friends and there are true friends. Jonathan was the first of those friends. Let’s read chapter 18, verses 1,3, and 4. **“Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.”** The phrase “the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David” shows that he was a kindred spirit, and the phrase, “Jonathan loved him as his own soul,” shows that he was totally committed to David. He was to be a life-long friend. And what is even more remarkable about this friendship is that Jonathan is about 46 years old, and David is 18 (see Nolan, pp. 94-99). So there is a huge disparity between their ages.

And Jonathan was anything but a self-serving friend. Take a look at verses 3-4:

1Samuel 18:3 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

1Samuel 18:4 And Jonathan took off the robe that *was* on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt.

Commentators point out that by giving his armor and clothing, Jonathan was relinquishing his rights to the throne and declaring that he believed that David should inherit the throne. Jonathan is the crown prince, but he thinks David is better qualified. Whether God had revealed that to

Jonathan or not, we are not told. But it is clear that Jonathan is not using David for his own advancement. He loves David as a friend, and is looking for *David's* best interests. Are you a true friend to someone by this measurement? Later Jonathan would say to David, “**Whatever you say, I will do for you**” (20:4). That is a sign of true friendship. You can hardly impose upon an intimate friend. True friends *want* to serve each other.

And such true friends are wonderful to have. When verse 1 speaks of Jonathan's soul being knit to David's, it is talking about those two souls being tied or chained together. Scripture says, “**A man who has friends must show himself friendly** [in other words he must do things that build friendship. It goes on], **and there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother**” (Prov. 18:24). They stick together. Jonathan and David were such friends. They stuck with each other through trials and tribulations. Their friendship spanned the huge gulf of economics and politics. They stuck with each other when Jonathan's father was slandering David. They stuck with each other despite the dangers in doing so. Jonathan was almost killed one time when he stuck up for David. In future chapters we will see that all of this was mutual. They honored each other, spoke well of each other to others, sacrificed for each other, interceded for each other, sought to promote the welfare of each other, and were heart-broken when they had to separate from each other. Those are all ways to show yourself friendly – honor, building up, defending each other, communicating on a heart level, sacrificing, promoting the welfare of each other, praying for each other.

So God knew that David would need a faithful friend in the upcoming years when he would be facing tough times. He knows how to bring friends into our lives at just the right moments. An intimate friend is a rare thing indeed. Often we have only one or two such friends in our entire lifetime, and some people have never experienced that kind of closeness. Jesus Himself had only one bosom friend – the apostle John. Peter and James were also close friends, but there is something different about a bosom friend. So bless the Lord if you have such a bosom friend, and show yourself friendly. Make sure that you do not take such a friendship for granted; stir it up.

But any true friend, whether it is a bosom friend like the apostle John, a close friend like Peter and James, or friends like the other apostles, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, value your friendships; invest in your friendships.

And I say that this true friendship happened as part of the aftermath of David's success because it was when David lived by faith that his true character began to be noticed by Jonathan. Until your faithful heart is

exposed, you are not going to make faithful friends. Shallow friends, yes. But the kind of heart you show forth will determine the kind of heart that is attracted to it. That's one of the reasons why king Saul attracted so many users – they could smell what kind of heart he had. So if you want true friendship to develop rather than false ones, put God ahead of everything else. David was willing to die for God in his fight with Goliath. So was Jonathan in his amazing fight with the Philistines in chapter 14. Don't think that you will have a godly bosom friend if you don't have a passion for godliness as well.

III. You will be respected by others and they will benefit from your leadership (18:5)

OK, there is a third thing that happened in the aftermath of David's success. He found that others benefited from his leadership and respected him. This is a good thing. They weren't necessarily friends, but his success gave many people respectful attitudes toward him. They benefited from his leadership. Look at verse 5:

1 Samuel 18:5 So David went out wherever Saul sent him, and behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

Even though Saul would turn on David later in this chapter, when all the people saw the faithfulness of David, they would continue to respect him. It was one of the things that made the reunification of north and south possible in later years. Today there are many leaders whose reputations and ministries have been attacked by the Saul's of the world, but because they have had servants' hearts like David, they continue to have influence with many others.

But there was more than respect here. David gained more and more leadership *opportunities* as he proved himself. Proverbs 22:9 says, **“Do you see a man *who excels in his work*? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before unknown *men*.”** In other words, success breeds more success if you are faithful. If you put your all into your spiritual battles, God will give you an ever-increasing amount of success; in fact, it will be a compounding degree of success.

A third thing that I see from verse 5 is that when we are walking where God wants us to walk, others will always benefit. And really, that is the whole purpose for the gifts and talents that God has given to each of you. God did not give you talents just to spend it on yourself. He gave you talents

to benefit others. 1Corinthians 14:12 says that God gave us gifts “**for the edification of the church.**” Ephesians 4:12 says that gifts were given “**for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.**” 1Peter 4:10 says, “**As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.**” When we use our gifts and talents only selfishly for ourselves, we short-circuit God’s purpose for gifts. David used his gifts and talents for God’s glory and for the benefit of God’s people. And that is why his success kept multiplying – God was blessing it. When you have a steward’s heart, God trusts you with more.

IV. Some will inappropriately idolize you (18:6-7)

Here’s point IV - you can almost always count on being tested when you have success. In this case, one of the testings of David’s character came as people started inappropriately idolizing him. Look at chapter 18, verses 6-7.

1Samuel 18:6 Now it had happened as they were coming *home*, when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments.

1Samuel 18:7 So the women sang as they danced, and said:

**“Saul has slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands.”**

This is an example of hero worship. These women didn’t even know David before this day, but as news spread of his courage and success, the real David with all his foibles was lost in the rhetoric of celebrity worship. David had not killed ten thousand men that day. This is the exaggerated language of hero worship. You know a person has become an idol when those who have never seen him blindly sing his praises or weep over his losses. When Michael Jackson died, someone said, “People have been weeping, hysterically and publicly, professing undying love for a man they never knew. That, dear readers, is idolatry; not compassion.” And I agree.

There is a huge difference between holy admiration for a person and hero worship. Holy admiration is honoring what God honors about a person and desiring that we would be just as faithful to God. Holy admiration is God-centered and recognizes that God’s strength is made perfect in our (what?) - *weakness*. The Bible does not treat any of the heroes of the faith with hero worship. It honestly acknowledges both the defects and the things that were God-given virtues. And the bible uses praise, but it does not gloss over defects when it praises.

When I read the missionary biographies of William Carey, Don Richardson, Stan Dale, or other missionary “greats,” I had no illusions about their short-fallings. There are things about William Carey and David Livingston that I strongly disagree with – for example, how they related to their families. I disagree with some of the theology and a lot of the character of Stan Dale – especially how he failed to nurture his wife. But what makes me admire all of those men is that they were weak vessels totally sold out to Jesus. They were channels of God’s grace. They walked by faith. And because they gave their all, God changed entire societies through their efforts. When I read those books they brought me to tears because those books elicited a deep desire within me to lay down my life for Jesus. I want to give my all for Him, and I admire those men for doing exactly that. That’s all appropriate.

Hero worship is quite different. Hero worship does not focus upon God, but focuses on how wonderful, how strong, and how awesome the person is. It goes beyond praise. Praise is very appropriate. Paul’s epistles are filled with honest praise. But hero worship almost always tends to exaggerate the good that is in a person. It becomes blind to the short-fallings. For these people to make David ten times better than Saul at this stage in his life was not fair. And to say that David had slain his ten thousands was not true. Their praise gave an inflated picture of who David was.

And let me tell you something – there is a lot of idolatrous hero worship that goes on in the church of Jesus Christ today. And I am not just talking about movie stars, or celebrity singers, or Oprah, or politicians who can do no wrong. There are pastors who have been barraged with celebrity worship. People will defend every word and every action of these pastors because they have become blind to the fact that all men have grave weaknesses that must be covered by the blood of Jesus. And to engage in hero worship of such celebrities is a sin on the part of the people. Do you have any celebrity worship that needs to be repented of?

And actually, it can become the downfall of those celebrities if they allow themselves to believe what others are saying. Proverbs 27:21 says, “**man is tested by the praise he receives**” (NIV). It will show what is in his heart. If a passion to glorify God is there, he will give credit to God for his successes like David did. I appreciated some of the comments by the Auburn quarterback last week. When you are dependent upon God, His praise will be on your lips. When pride has not been crucified in your heart, even legitimate praise can destroy you.

Of course, when I say it can destroy you, I don't mean that you won't continue to be a success. Saul continued to have successes in battle after battle for many years, and in this chapter he continues to have hero worship. They weren't trying to put Saul down with these songs. They were engaged in exaggerated praise of Saul too. People can ride on the coattails of success for a long time without God's grace. The Spirit of God had departed from Saul all the way back in chapter 16:14, but he was still treated as a celebrity.

Of course, there is nothing a Mark Driscoll, a John Piper, a Billy Graham or others can do about the hero worship that is poured on them. They can try to deflect that worship like David did in Psalm 144. But how they respond to that hero worship will either destroy their walk with God or make them even more useful to God. Saul responded to hero worship with pride in the past, and now that someone else was being praised more than him, he responded with jealousy. And we will look at Saul's response in a moment.

But how did David keep from pride? How did he escape from the dangers of idolatrous praise? I believe that Psalm 144 kept him humble. In verses 1-2 he reminds himself that he could not accomplish anything on the battlefield without God's presence and help. He doesn't deny that he was involved or that he had skill, but he does indicate that God enabled him to have the victory. In verses 3-4 he goes on to say,

**Psalms 144:3 LORD, what *is* man, that You take knowledge of him?
Or the son of man, that You are mindful of him?**

**Psalms 144:4 Man is like a breath;
His days *are* like a passing shadow.**

He was reminding himself – “Lord, I know that I am nothing apart from you.” When people start patting you on the back for some success that you have had, or some heroic action that you have taken, and they start praising you, it can be difficult to know how to respond. You don't want to have a false humility by saying, “Oh it was nothing.” That would be a lie if you made huge sacrifices. It is something. But on the other hand, you don't want to acknowledge their exaggerated praises either. How do you handle it? I would encourage you to accept praise that is proper admiration with a “Thank you.” And you can follow that up with an acknowledgement of God – perhaps saying, “Thank you. I am glad that God helped me make the sacrifices needed.” Or “Thank you. I'm glad that God gave me success today, but I would praise him even if we did poorly.” If they give you exaggerated praise, saying (as it were) that you have killed your ten thousands, you can perhaps deflect it with humor – “No, I don't think I'm up

to taking on 10,000 today! But I am thankful for what God has enabled me to do.” So just be on guard.

V. **Some may become jealous and turn on you when they see you as a threat (18:8-9)**

The last thing that happened in the aftermath of success was the jealousy of Saul. Verses 8-9 show that he didn't take too kindly to someone receiving more praise than he did.

1 Samuel 18:8 Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, “They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *only* thousands. Now *what* more can he have but the kingdom?”
1 Samuel 18:9 So Saul eyed David from that day forward.

It's really ridiculous when you think about it – the praise of Saul was already exaggerated, but he wanted it to be more exaggerated. The text shows that this anger clearly flowed from pride. So pride produced anger; anger then produced an inner disapproval of David. The Hebrew for displeased means to look upon someone disparagingly or disapprovingly (HALOT). David hadn't really done anything wrong, but all of a sudden he could do nothing right in Saul's eyes. And then verse 9 says that Saul “eyed David.” The Hebrew word can have two meanings. Others have translated it as “kept a jealous eye on David,” but it can also have the meaning of “transgressed.” The New American Commentary says that a double entendre is probably meant where Saul kept a jealous eye on David and looked for opportunities to sin against him. Jealousy is always a destructive force, and when it is not nipped in the bud right away, it seeks to sin against and destroy what it cannot attain to.

If you are a jealous Saul, there are two lessons I would like you to learn. The first is that jealousy flows from a defective heart. In this case, Saul's pride led to anger, displeasure with everything David stood for, bitterness, and finally jealousy. You will never get rid of your jealousy if you don't start crucifying the heart issues that have led to the jealousy. And really, this is true of any sin. Just as you can't kill ants one at a time on the kitchen counter because the queen ant is producing more than you can kill, you can't kill sins without going after the nest inside. When you are trying to help your child conquer lying, find out why your child is motivated to lie and start giving homework that will kill the motivations and spiritually poison the queen ant as it were.

The second lesson I would like to give to the Sauls in our midst is that without the presence of the Spirit in your life, you will not be able to avoid a

downward slide into worse and worse sin. Backsliding starts slowly at first, but it gathers momentum if it is not stopped. To avoid the downward slide into apostasy it is imperative that you cling to the Holy Spirit and depend daily upon his grace. As David said, “Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.”

If you are a David, there is one application that I want to leave with you from the fifth point. Make sure that you are not polluted by the bitterness and jealousy of your foes. It can easily happen. Hebrews 11:15 says, **“looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled.”** It is easy to become defiled by the bitterness of others. We must constantly watch out. What Saul was going to do to David in the following verses and chapters was enough to make David himself bitter, angry, and jealous. It could have if he had not been on guard. But he refused to give in to such feelings. Instead he prayed for Saul, loved Saul, sought to promote and serve Saul well. He overcame evil with good. He blessed Saul when Saul cursed him. And we would do well to do the same.

Conclusion

Let me conclude by encouraging you to do in the spiritual realm what Coach Bowman told Michael Phelps to do in the swimming pool. In order to keep winning medals after his first Olympics, he had to let that first Olympics go, and let the nay-sayers go, and the celebrity-worshippers go, and he had to get back to the basics of training. He had to determine to keep striving to do better. And brothers and sisters, if you have that attitude in the spiritual realm; if you realize that you will never outgrow the basics of Christianity; if you keep pressing into the upward calling that you have in Christ Jesus, there is no reason why you will not receive God’s “well done thou good and faithful servant” when you get to heaven. There is no reason you will not continue to have successes and spiritual medals on earth. But you are always either moving forward or moving backwards. If Olympians let up on their training at all, they start to lose to others. Your spiritual Olympics does not allow you to coast. In Philippians 3:13-14 Paul said, **“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”** May that be our response as well as we face the aftermath of our successes. Amen.

Brothers and sisters, in the aftermath of successes, I charge you to get back to the basics and keep pressing forward into more victories.

The Aftermath of Spiritual Success

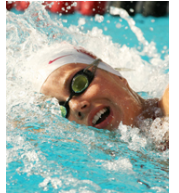
1Samuel 17:55 – 18:9

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 1-16-2011

Michael Phelps



Elaine Breeden



Introduction – there are dangers that arise after victories

- A story of two Olympians

I. You will find false friends who want to use you (17:55-58 with 18:2)

- Why did David keep serving Saul even though he knew he was being used?
- How can the presence of false friends actually work together for our good?
- How did Psalm 144 help David to deal with this?

II. You will find true friends who become kindred spirits (18:1,3-4)

- What evidence was there that Jonathan was a true friend?
- How do you nurture friendships?
- What must your heart be like if you are to have a godly bosom friend?

III. You will be respected by others and they will benefit from your leadership (18:5)

- Why did God give you gifts and talents? (1Cor. 14:12; Eph. 4:12; 1Pet 4:10)

IV. Some will inappropriately idolize you (18:6-7)

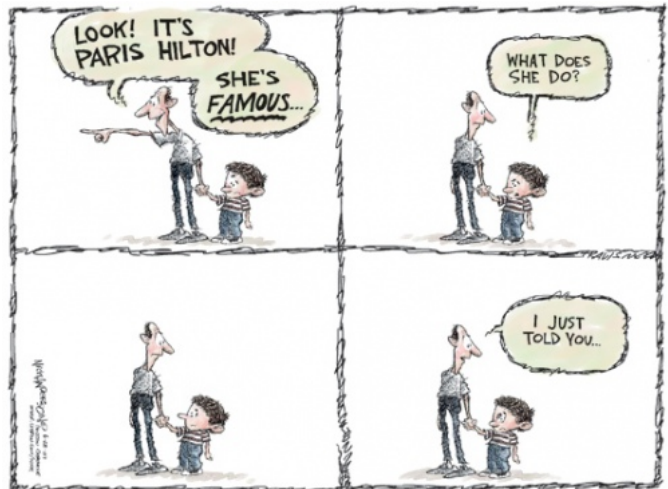
Quote on Celebrity Worship

"Under their exploited influence, our envy and infatuation often bypasses logic, reason and sound judgment, persuading us to listen and follow their lead even though they don't know us and we don't know them beyond the manufactured and well-guarded image we see and hear in the media.

This is the mysterious power of celebrity – a seductive and intoxicating force that too many covet and too few fear – a form of inebriation and delusion, and at times, insanity that incites brazen and bizarre behavior from those who fawn at the feet of fame, making them say and do things they would not otherwise.

The next time you happen to be anywhere near a celebrity, don't watch them – watch the people around them and you'll better understand what I'm talking about. Hopefully, what you see and hear will be offensive enough to keep you from being brought under the celebrity's spell."

Paul Proctor



V. Some may become jealous and turn on you when they see you as a threat (18:8-9)

- How did David respond to jealousy?
- How do you keep from getting jealous?

Conclusion

- Go back to the basics
- Keep pressing forward