

I remembered the opening Lines of a song the other day – it was a song that we used to sing at HTB – It was written by a chap called Martin Smith – I’ve no idea who Martin Smith is but it’s a good song!

The lines are

“Lord you have my heart, and I will search for yours”!

What does this mean? Lord you have my heart and I will search for yours!

I will search for your heart Lord?

Acts 13:22

'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'

David was a man after God’s own heart!

But how?

Why is David a man after God’s own heart?

What does it mean to be a man after Gods own heart?

Is there anyone here a man after Gods own heart?

I don’t know!

Maybe the last line in that verse explains it a bit.

'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'

I find this very challenging – because I’m well aware of times in my own walk when I’m not listening to the Lord – when I feel I’m going against what He’s telling me to do!

David’s heart wanted to do God’s will!

I think this is also very reassuring if you think of all the things that David did wrong – and God still called him a man after his own heart.

David was a shepherd as a young boy that was his job – he had to look after the sheep and make sure they came to no harm.

Now this is a very important roll, and I don't think David did it alone – sheep were a very important asset in those days – a man's wealth was judged by the size of his flocks.

Sheep are very docile animals but they do have a tendency to wonder and get lost, and also get into difficulty – so you would need more than one person to look after them especially if you had any decent size flock on open ground – which they would have been grazing on in Israel

We can assume that Jesse was quite a wealthy man – When Samuel came to Bethlehem and invited Jesse and his seven elder sons to a sacrifice He would have had enough hired hands to look after the sheep without any of his other sons being there.

We can assume also that David didn't have a very senior roll in the shepherding because when Jesse wanted someone to run errands for him – like take food to his three eldest sons fighting in the wars against Philistines he sent David – he was obviously happy that the sheep would be in safe hands even if David wasn't there.

The point I'm trying to make is that David would have probably been a junior shepherd – and probably wouldn't have had the over all responsibility of the sheep on his shoulders.

He would have been a young apprentice if you like!

That's where everybody begins their career – we all start at the bottom.

David was still considered a boy – there would have been older men with more experience working with him – teaching him – showing him the ropes helping him to learn about being a shepherd.

After all presumably because of his age possibly because of his stature he wasn't even considered by his own father – to be invited to the sacrifice Samuel held to anoint one of Jesse's sons to be the next King.

So I'm guessing that David was a junior who wouldn't have had a lot of responsibility over the flock on his shoulders.

Which makes the next passage from 1 Samuel all the more surprising!

1 Samuel 17:34-35

But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear.

So where were the Hired hands – the older more experienced shepherds – where were all the others – where did they go?

Well if a lion turns up you can guess where they went – where would you or I go – probably where ever the Lion wasn't

It can't have been they were just in a different place and didn't realise what was going on. If sheep start to panic they all panic it isn't an isolated occurrence – so if a lion or a bear came into the flock in one corner everyone would soon know about it pretty quickly.

I think the dedication and the responsibility of the other shepherds only went so far.

I think that the other Shepherds were probably prepared to protect the sheep from wild dogs – even wolves but a Lion – or a bear – I mean – what would they have to fight the lion with – a shepherds crook – a sling – I don't know if they had much else.

They wouldn't have had swords and shields to fight the lion or the bear with – I think it would have been a reasonable call to say – ok let the lion have that one – we'll round these up and go.

But not so with David – The shepherd's job was to protect the sheep and David was going to protect the sheep no matter what - even if it meant put his own life on the line – he was going to protect the sheep!

The hearts of the other shepherds must have melted away at the sight of a lion or a bear coming into the flock – but David's heart was steadfast

1 Samuel 16:7

The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

That sums it up right there!

Man looks at the outward appearance – but God looks at the heart

And David's heart was steadfast

David's heart was to do whatever he was called upon to do – and he had the courage and the will to do it because he had the conviction that the Lord was by his side.

He didn't fight Goliath for Saul's Daughter's hand in marriage – it wasn't for the riches that Saul offered to the man who defeated Goliath – None of those things were on David's heart.

What was on David's heart was this.

1 Samuel 17:36

Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God.

And what did he most want from his victory over Goliath

1 Samuel 17:46

This day the LORD will hand you over to me.../ ...and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel.

It seems that the only thing that was on David's heart was the glory of the Lord!

I wonder if David had gone to fight Goliath for any of the riches that Saul offered him would he have still had the courage to go and fight – or – fighting for such earthly prizes – would he have come to his earthly senses – and decided there was no way he could defeat Goliath – like all the other man in Israel's camp.

You see it doesn't matter how often you come to church – though coming to church is good – It isn't going to change anything.

It doesn't matter how much money you give to the poor – though giving to the poor is good – it isn't going to change anything.

It doesn't matter what you do!

It doesn't matter if you give up your job and go to Africa or India or China to be a missionary for God.

It doesn't matter if you face extreme danger while your there! It doesn't matter.

It doesn't matter if you put your life on the line for the Lord

It doesn't matter that you do these things – what matters is why you do these things!

It matters why you come to church!

It matters why you give money to the poor!

It matters why you become a missionary.

It mattered why David went to fight Goliath!

What separated him from all the other men in the Israelite camp wasn't that he went to fight Goliath – what separated him from the men in the Israelite camp was why he went to fight Goliath

1 Samuel 15:22

"Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice".

David was willing to obey God whatever the danger.

It doesn't matter what job we do on earth – what matters is why we do it!

And why we do it should dictate how we do it!

In Matthew 28 we were all given a commission, which should rule our lives.

We were told to go and tell all the world about Jesus – if we are seeking God's heart then that is what's on Gods heart – and that is our objective in work!

If we are truly seeking God's heart then that's our objective in all we do is to tell all the world about Jesus.

If some one were to ask me in the past - what was my Job – I would have probably told them I was a fashion designer.

But I don't think that's what I am in God's eyes?

I don't think that's why he drew me to him?

If, when I get to heaven, and the some of my achievements on earth would be to have designed some wonderful clothes – even to have designed some iconic land mark, culture defining clothes that would typify a period in history – would God say to me weld done good and faithful servant – you're a man after my own heart – I don't think so.

My Job is not a fashion designer – my job is to tell the world about Jesus! And I tell the world about Jesus through the medium of fashion design. I evangelise to the world but specifically to the fashion industry.

But I can't go up to them in the meeting rooms and say let me tell you about Jesus – they wouldn't listen – I can't draw people to Jesus – they wouldn't listen to me if that's all I did.

We are called to show them Jesus – through the way we live our lives – through our attitude – through the way we do our work – so that they can see the character of Jesus and Jesus can draw them to himself.

Each one of us here today is called to be an evangelist – through what ever medium or what ever gifting the Lord has given us – that is what he has called us to be.

Some people may say I'm not really an evangelist my gifting is more in pastoral care! Well that may be – but that's not why the Lord put you here!

The Lord called you to Himself to be an evangelist to evangelise through the gift of pastoral care – so that the Glory of the Lord may be seen through you as you care for others.

Colossians 3:17

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

And if we are seeking his heart that is what we must do.

We serve an excellent God – so we must be excellent in all we do!

Maybe we can't be excellent in all that we do – but we can be excellent in the effort we put in.

We serve the Lord 24/7

We serve him when we get up in the morning – we serve him when we go to work– we serve him when we come home from work – we serve him if we go to the pub after work – we serve him on the weekends – we serve him on Sundays - we serve him we serve him we serve him – we make mistakes – we fall down – we get up – we fall down again – it doesn't matter – what matters is that we have in our hearts the will to serve God!

And if the will to serve God is truly in our hearts – then it will come out in our actions – and into our words – it will touch people as we speak to them and the Lord will draw people to himself.

As God say's in **1 Samuel 2:30**

“Those who honor me I will honor”