

2 Samuel 9 — The Kindness Of The King

May 21, 2023

Good morning CrossWinds! If you are new, it is great to have you. Each week, on Friday, I put out a little video. We put the videos in our weekly email newsletter, the church app, and on Facebook. In the video, I have a few church announcements, and I interview someone in the church so you can see what they do for a living. Sometimes I end up at a Dairy Farm. Sometimes I am with farmers in a combine. Other times I end up at the ice cream store.

Every once in a while, I like to break it up and do something different for the video. I was able to do that this week. I had a chance to interview one of the owners of our local Jersey Mike's restaurant. He doesn't know Jesus, but he is a great guy who is super friendly. He agreed to let me interview him about what Jersey Mikes taught him about how to open a successful business in a small community. My hope was to learn from him what he learned about reaching a small community so as a church, we can better reach our community. It was a great interview. It is not on Facebook. It is only available in our weekly email and on the church app. If you don't have the church app, you can download it by scanning the QR code on the back of your bulletin. Once you are in the app, look in the Spirit Lake campus communications groups. The interview is the most recent post.

One of the things his Jersey Mike's training taught him is that his job is not just to make sandwiches. It is to take a genuine interest in everyone who enters the door. He needs to smile and be positive. He needs to take the initiative to talk to his customers. He needs to be willing to share a bit about his own life and

remember what is important in the life of his customers. Being positive and taking a genuine interest in everyone who walks in the door is one of Jersey Mike's secrets to success.

When I heard that, I realized this is something we can learn from as a church. When anyone comes in our door, they are just like a customer at a sandwich shop. They are checking things out. They are wondering if anyone in this building will walk up to them. They are wondering if anyone will take the time to talk to them. They are wondering if anyone is interested in them. They wonder if anyone will care about them enough to remember their name and their life. If nobody cares about them. If nobody takes a genuine interest in them, chances are, they will not be back.

We are not selling sandwiches. We have something of far greater importance, Jesus Christ. If positivity, initiative, and taking a genuine interest in people are essential for the success of a restaurant, it also needs to be an essential part of CrossWind's strategy to reach our community.

This is an appropriate question for all of us. Am I taking a genuine interest in the people God brings in the doors? If I was new, would I want to return because people took a genuine interest in me? Would I walk away thinking nobody cared about me?

While these are questions all of us need to ask, I want to take the time to compliment many of you. You already take the initiative. You are positive. You naturally take a genuine interest in the people who walk through the door.

I know this because two weeks ago, a friend of mine came to church. I have been praying for him and asking him to come for over 2 years. For the last two years, he never came. Two weeks ago, he walked through the doors. Of course, he expected me to be friendly toward him. What impressed him the most are the people who didn't know him that came up to him and talked with him. They took a genuine interest in him. That made a difference!

Thank you to those of you who are so good at initiating conversation, positivity, and taking a genuine interest in people. Know that it makes a difference. I want to challenge all of us toward the goal of reaching the people that God brings through our doors with the good news of Jesus.

A good sandwich will satisfy you until dinner, but Jesus will change your life forever!

Let's turn our thoughts to the message.

Today, we are back in 2 Samuel. For most of 1 and 2 Samuel, David was running for his life. Now that David is king over all of Israel, things went extremely well for him. 2 Samuel 8 to 10 are the high points in David's life.

Two weeks ago, in 2 Samuel 8, we looked at the conquests of David. The area of the Promised Land, given to Israel by God, is mentioned three times. First to Abraham, then to Moses, and then to Joshua. The full dimensions of the Promised Land were much bigger than what Israel possessed. David became the new Joshua and returned to the mission of conquering the Promised Land. For the first time in Israel's history, under David, Israel conquered and possessed the

full amount of the Promised Land God gave them. David was a conquering king that brought the kings in the Promised Land into submission.

Two weeks ago, we also looked at the way David governed. The Bible tells us David ran his government with justice and righteousness. He didn't play favorites. There were no political insiders. He didn't tolerate corruption. He demanded integrity. He didn't tolerate people in his government who were prideful and developed an ego. The way David ran his government is unheard of today. Today the government is filled with corruption and party bickering. David didn't tolerate any of that.

This morning, in 2 Samuel 9, we will see that David was not just a conquering leader. He was not just a leader dedicated to justice and integrity. He was also a man of great kindness and compassion. That is another quality lacking in many of today's leaders.

As a reminder, all of this will come crashing down for David in 2 Samuel 11 when he pursues an adulterous relationship with a woman named Bathsheba. She becomes pregnant with his child, and David murders her husband to hide his sin. After that, it is downhill the rest of the way for David. This is a reminder that all sin brings suffering. At this point, we are not there. Right now, things are still going up in David's life.

This morning, we are going to build our study around the theme of the kindness of the king. All of our points will be about the king's kindness. We will also see that David's amazing kindness is a preview of God's amazing kindness to us through Jesus. Let's begin and you will see what I mean.

Kindness Promised

And David said, "Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" 2 Samuel 9:1 (ESV)

David had been king for more than a decade. At this point, the high-stress wars of the last chapter were over and David was no longer fighting three kings at once on two different fronts hoping and praying he would survive. The pace of life was starting to settle down. With a rapidly expanding kingdom now under control, David finally had a chance to think. His mind turned to an old friend named Jonathan. Fifteen to twenty years before this, Jonathan died in battle defending his father, King Saul, to the death. As we will see, David made a promise to him. Now David wanted to make sure he kept that promise.

To keep that promise, David asked his advisors if there was anyone left from Saul's kingdom still alive. Most of Saul's family and key men were dead. Saul died in battle against the Philistines on Mount Gilboa at the end of 1 Samuel. Three of Saul's four sons also died in that battle defending their father. In 2 Samuel, Abner, Saul's army commander, also died. Ish-bosheth, the remaining son of Saul, was also killed. David did not lift a finger against any of them. God took all of them out.

When David asked if there was still anyone left from the old regime of Saul, most kings would ask that question so they could be sure to kill the remaining sons of the former king. That would remove potential rivals to the kingdom.

For David, that wasn't the case. Many years before, David had made a solemn promise to King Saul, and later he made a similar covenant with

Jonathan that he would not cut off their offspring. He would not destroy their children and grandchildren when he became king.

Here is the request Saul made to David not to destroy his descendants when David became king.

“Swear to me therefore by the LORD that you will not cut off my offspring after me, and that you will not destroy my name out of my father’s house.” 1 Samuel 24:21 (ESV)

Also, in 1 Samuel, we have Jonathan, Saul’s son, coming to the same realization that David would be king. He also requested that David would not destroy his children and grandchildren. He asked David to preserve his family line, not wipe out the family line, which is what was typically done.

“...and do not cut off your steadfast love from my house forever, when the LORD cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.” 1 Samuel 20:15 (ESV)

The first thing we see by way of application is that David was a man of his word. He was a man of character. Even though the promises he made to Saul and Jonathan were 15 to 20 years before this time and were made under very different circumstances, once David was out of crisis mode in the kingdom, he set about the business of being a man of his word. We are used to government officials who make campaign promises, but once they are in office, they don’t keep those promises. David was different. He made promises, and he kept them. He was a man of his word.

This is a great reminder for us. We live in a world where people are not known for their integrity, and where they do not keep their word. People are known for breaking promises, not keeping them. As Christians, we are to be

distinctively different in the world because we keep our promises. We are people of integrity.

Let's look at the kind of promise David made to Jonathan. David asks if any descendent of Jonathan is still alive because he wants to show him kindness, for Jonathan's sake.

...so I can show him kindness for Jonathan's sake... 2 Samuel 9:1 (ESV)

The word for kindness in this verse is a special word in Hebrew. It is the word *Hesed*. It is a much heavier word than casual kindness. It means unending love. It is loyal love. It is love that is kept when it is not easy to keep. That is what *Hesed* means.

Today, the most common place we see *Hesed* love is in a marriage commitment. In a marriage ceremony, the couple promises to have and to hold, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health. They promise to love and cherish one another until death do they part. That is unending love. That is loyal love. That is the kind of love and kindness David wants to show to Jonathan's descendants.

Marriage is not the only place where we make a commitment to keep our word instead of breaking it. In church, when we dedicate children, I often have the congregation stand up and ask people to promise to be the adults who support parents in raising the children. I ask you to promise to help provide church education for the children. Most of us nod in the affirmative, when I ask you to make that promise. When it comes time to recruit AWANA leaders and youth workers, nobody is around. We make the promise to support parents but

are rarely interested in keeping our promise to support the children of the parents. That is not good.

In a similar way, when people join the church, they promise to faithfully attend the church, to give of their resources to support the church and to get involved in serving others in the church. What happens next? Life gets busy, and people rarely attend. The brand of coffee we serve changes and in protest, some people stop giving to the church. When we recruit for the nursery, miraculously, nobody is available. That is a lack of integrity. That is making promises but not taking seriously our responsibility to keep those promises.

Even if the promises we made were years before under very different circumstances, we have a responsibility to keep the promises we made, just like David did with the promises he made to Saul and Jonathan.

Kindness Initiated

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, "I am your servant." 2 Samuel 9:2 (ESV)

David's servants have done the research. They have a hard time finding anyone left from Saul's kingdom. All they could find was a man named Ziba, who was not part of Saul's lineage. He was a chief servant in Saul's house. As we will see, he took over Saul's estate. He had a large family and many servants of his own. While not biologically related to Saul, he was caring for Saul's large estate and receiving the profits from the farm. Later, we will have serious questions about his character. At this point, we don't have those questions. Right now, he offers himself up as a servant of the king.

And the king said, “Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?” ... 2 Samuel 9:3a (ESV)

David says, “Do you know of anyone left in Saul’s house, from Saul’s line, who is still alive so that I can show the kindness of God to him?”

The Hebrew word for kindness is the same word for kindness that we used earlier. It is the word *Hesed*. It means unfailing love. Loyal love.

Interestingly, David knows that the loyal love he plans to show is the same kind of loyal love that God shows to us. What is God’s loyal love like to us? Does God ever give up on us? Does God consistently give us more than we deserve? Is God far better to us than we can imagine? Of course, He is! This kind of loyal love David plans to show to Jonathan’s descendants will be overwhelming, just like God’s loyal love is to us if he could just find someone still alive.

Ziba said to the king, “There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet.” 2 Samuel 9:3b (ESV)

On the surface, Ziba acted like a loyal servant of David. Later doubts about his character and motives will surface. Much later, in 2 Samuel 21:8, we will learn that Ziba was not telling the whole truth. The impression given to David and to us is that this crippled son of Jonathan is the only surviving member of Saul’s household.

Ziba tells us just one thing about this son. He was a cripple. It is reasonable to assume the existence of this son, and his disability, was news to David. Earlier, we learned how this son how he lost the use of both legs.

Jonathan, the son of Saul, had a son who was crippled in his feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel, and his nurse took him up and fled, and as she fled in her haste, he fell and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth. 2 Samuel 4:4 (ESV)

When the news of the death of Saul and Jonathan at the battle of Mount Gilboa reached Jonathan's hometown, those in Saul's family knew it wouldn't be long until the Philistines showed up and killed them too. Little Mephibosheth's nurse picked him up and ran for her life. In the rush to get out of town carrying the little boy, she dropped Mephibosheth, breaking his back.

If anyone needed the kindness of God, it would be this guy. He was a cripple. Life was hard for him.

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." 2 Samuel 9:4 (ESV)

These names and locations read like a geographical potluck soup. Everything is jumbled together and doesn't make much sense. There is a great deal of significance in these names and locations. Today, let's just look at the

location. Mephibosheth was living in Lo-debar. This is a location on the east side of the Jordan River. Lo-debar was considered a ghetto town. Debar means a word of a thing. Lo is the negative



particle. The town's name is no-place or no-thing. He was living in a town named no-where. Shepherds also used Lo-Debar to describe it as a land without pasture. If we look at this area from a satellite, it is easy to understand how this land received its name. It is a sandy desert. It is a place where nobody wants to live.



This descendent of Jonathan had a hard life. He was crippled. He lives with a guy named Machir in the middle of the desert in a town called No-place.

While Saul and Jonathan, his father and grandfather, were men of great athletic ability, Mephibosheth was a cripple. While his father and grandfather were a king and a prince living in luxury, Mephibosheth was the opposite. He was reduced to living in a terrible place.

Kindness Doubted

David wasted no time in sending for this remaining survivor of Saul's house, Mephibosheth, Jonathan's crippled son.

Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar. 2 Samuel 9:5 (ESV)

Put yourself in Mephibosheth's shoes. You know that new kings put to death all the descendants of previous regimes. Life is hard. You are a cripple through no fault of your own. You have been hiding in a desert to save your life, now Ziba, Saul's chief servant, ratted you out and gave your location away. The king sent for you. The king is bringing you to Jerusalem. You go there expecting to die. Life really stinks. You became a cripple through no fault of your own. You are now going to be killed simply because you were born into the wrong family at the wrong time. Life is tough.

And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David... 2 Samuel 9:6a (ESV)

It is safe to assume Mephibosheth knew nothing of David's promise to Jonathan to show loving kindness to his descendants. No doubt, Mephibosheth trembled in fear the whole trip. Mephibosheth came into the palace. Let's watch things unfold.

...and fell on his face and paid homage... 2 Samuel 9:6b (ESV)

I don't know if Mephibosheth came on crutches or an ancient version of a wheelchair. With considerable pain from legs that didn't function, he got flat on his face in front of David, to pay David honor and respect while he begged for mercy. He had no reason to expect kindness, especially the kindness of God from this king.. I am sure the next words out of David's mouth shocked him.

...And David said, "Mephibosheth!"... 2 Samuel 9:6c (ESV)

The text doesn't tell us David's tone when he spoke these words. I am confident there was tenderness and kindness in David's voice. He didn't say Mephibosheth with hatred and a thirst for blood. The kindness of David's voice was so unexpected that the way David said his name didn't sink into his heart. Keeping his face to the ground, he said these words.

...And he answered, "Behold, I am your servant." 2 Samuel 9:6d (ESV)

Mephibosheth was still in a panic begging for his life. Look what David said next.

Kindness Assured

And David said to him, "Do not fear..." 2 Samuel 9:7a (ESV)

David sees him shaking like a leaf. He hears the trembling in Mephibosheth's voice, and David tried to calm him. David might have raised his

voice a bit at this point. That was not out of anger but out of love to calm this terrified cripple.

...for I will show you kindness... 2 Samuel 9:7b (ESV)

The Hebrew reads a little differently. It is in the emphatic tense. David says, "I will SURELY show you kindness." The word for kindness is the *hesed* word again. Faithful love, loyal love. It is not based on you. I will surely show you loyal love, the loyal love of God. The kind of overwhelming love and kindness God has for us. That is what David will show to him. David will not kill him. He will go out of his way to overwhelmingly love him. Why is David doing this?

...for the sake of your father Jonathan, 2 Samuel 9:7c (ESV)

David reveals that he made a promise to Jonathan, Mephibosheth's father. He was a man of his word. The kindness David would show to Mephibosheth would be the kind of kindness David would love to express to Jonathan himself for his great love and kindness to David over the years.

David's kindness to Mephibosheth was expressed by two gifts.

David restored all the land of Saul to Mephibosheth.

...I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father,... 2 Samuel 9:7 (ESV)

This is interesting. King Saul apparently had a very large farm. When all the descendants of Saul were killed, except for Mephibosheth, somehow the land ended up in Ziba's hands, not Mephibosheth's hands. The man who was Saul's chief servant was working the land and receiving all the revenue off the land, while Mephibosheth, who was Jonathan's own son, was denied the land and lived in poverty. This was another bad turn in Mephibosheth's life. Somehow he was denied a vast inheritance and forced to live in poverty in the desert,

struggling to survive as a cripple. This tells me that Ziba, Saul's servant, might have been a shady character. He was more interested in keeping the profits of the land to himself rather than giving them to the rightful heir.

David invited Mephibosheth to eat at his table.

"...and you shall eat at my table always." 2 Samuel 9:7 (ESV)

This may not sound like much, but this was a huge privilege. When dinner time rolls around, who sits at the family dinner table? Only family! It was the family of the king who sat at the king's table. David took the cripple, the one who, up to this time, had nothing, who lived in poverty hiding in a desert, who was cheated out of his rightful inheritance, and he adopted him into his home to be part of David's family forever! For every meal that was served in the king's house from that day forward, there was a place set for Mephibosheth. In every family conversation at the dinner table, Mephibosheth was a part of the discussion. He was instantly taken from an outcast who lived in poverty to become part of the royal family and was given the immense riches of his rightful inheritance.

Isn't this an amazing story that shows the great kindness of King David? This is truly an over-the-top story showing the kindness of God's chosen king.

Do you see the parallel here between Jesus and David? Do you see the parallel between Mephibosheth and us?

Like Mephibosheth, because of the choice of our father, Adam, sin crippled us. We too lost our inheritance and were no longer the creation's rightful rulers. We were no longer in a living relationship with God. Like Mephibosheth, we were living in Lo-debar. We were living no-place going nowhere.

But just as David chose to show underserved kindness to Mephibosheth, God chose to show undeserved kindness to us. Just as David sought for Mephibosheth to bring him home to experience his kindness, God sent Jesus, who sought us out, to bring us home to God, so we could experience the kindness of God.

Just as David restored to Mephibosheth the inheritance he lost, God restored to us the inheritance we lost, plus much more. We have a vast inheritance in heaven that cannot perish, spoil, or fade. Just as David adopted Mephibosheth into his family, giving him a seat at the king's table forever, through Jesus, God has adopted us into the family of God. We are brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ who will sit at God's table forever.

Look what the New Testament says about these things. Can you see the parallel between the kindness of God shown to Mephibosheth and the kindness of God that Jesus has shown to us?

Look what Peter says about our identity.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 1 Peter 1:3–4 (ESV)

All that God is, all that he has, all that he has done and will do, whatever joy and blessedness the Son has in common with the Father we will share with Jesus forever.

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might

show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:4–7 (ESV)

What David did for Mephibosheth is what God did for us through Jesus! When we were as good as dead, just like David sought out Mephibosheth, God sought us out. Just as David gave Mephibosheth his inheritance back, in heaven for all of eternity, we have a vast inheritance through Jesus, which is ours to delight and enjoy to the glory of God.

David only promised Saul and Jonathan he would not cut off their descendants. David did much more than this. He honored Mephibosheth beyond his wildest imagination.

Isn't this also what Jesus has done for us? Jesus didn't just die for our sins. He didn't just save us from our sins. The Bible tells us Jesus has made us the most honored and blessed beings in the universe. We are cripples going nowhere who deserve none of this.

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, Ephesians 3:20 (ESV)

If you think the kindness David showed to Mephibosheth blows your imagination, that is nothing compared to the kindness God will show us through Jesus. His kindness to us is far more than we could ever ask or imagine.

David sought to reverse all the misfortunes of Mephibosheth. There was one thing he could not change. No matter how gracious David was toward him, he couldn't change the fact he was a cripple. The effects of that damage on his life couldn't be changed. This is where our story gets better. I don't know how the effects of sin have hurt you. I don't know how the effects of sin have crippled you. Maybe you are physically crippled. Maybe your body is sick. Maybe your body

has cancer. Maybe your mind is scared by the sin done to you. I don't know what it is. What I do know is that for all of eternity, Jesus is so good to us that he will take away from us every crippled effect sin had on our lives. There will be no cripples in eternity. There will be nobody struggling with cancer in the presence of Jesus. Nobody will be mentally scarred around Jesus. The kindness of Jesus, our king, takes away the effect of sin in every part of our life. Look how the Bible describes eternity with Jesus.

“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” Revelation 21:4 (ESV)

As I was thinking about this in my study, my mind began to wander. What would it be like for Mephibosheth at this point to turn his back on all of the kindness of the king? How foolish it would be for Mephibosheth to turn his back on having the riches of his inheritance restored so he could return to living in poverty in the desert. How foolish it would be for Mephibosheth to turn his back on being adopted into the family of the king to return to living no place going nowhere. Yet, this is what many people do in the church. We have a king who is much better to us than David ever could have been to Mephibosheth, but many people turn their back on Jesus. They walk back to the world thinking they will find true happiness in turning their back on the kindness of the king. My friends, that is utter foolishness.

This morning, if that is you, and you think Jesus is a joke and the pleasure of the world is a joy, you have it completely wrong. I beg you out of love to not turn your back on the kindness of King Jesus. Instead, run to him, delight in him,

and let yourself be overwhelmed by Jesus' love for you and what he has done for you.

Kindness Questioned

Understandably Mephibosheth found all this hard to believe.

And he paid homage and said, "What is your servant, that you should show regard for a dead dog such as I?" 2 Samuel 9:8 (ESV)

Mephibosheth saw himself as completely unworthy of any of this. He called himself a dead dog. Mephibosheth saw himself as insignificant in this life. He was crippled. He couldn't help anyone. He was powerless in this life. He was useless in life. He was completely underserving of any of the king's kindness. He kept wondering why David chose to do this.

Is that you? When you look at yourself in the mirror, do you see yourself as of no more value than a dead dog? There is not much you can do to contribute. You are not wealthy, talented, or resourceful. You are a cripple in this world. Why did God choose to love you through Jesus? You need to know the kind of king we have. Jesus is not the kind of king who only gives his good gifts to perfect and valuable people. He loves to pour out the riches of his kindness to broken and crippled people, the dead dogs of this world. That is the kind of king we have in Jesus. We love him so much not only because of the greatness of his undeserved kindness but that he loves to pour out his kindness on those who need it the most and deserve it the least.

Kindness Given

Then the king called Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson. And you and your sons and your servants shall till the land for him and shall bring in the

produce, that your master's grandson may have bread to eat. But Mephibosheth your master's grandson shall always eat at my table.... 2 Samuel 9:9–10a (ESV)

This means the profits of the farmland would go into Mephibosheth's pocket instead of Ziba's pocket. For every single meal, a place would be set for Mephibosheth at David's table. This is a major change in circumstances.

The biblical writer tells us Ziba was a wealthy man of his own. He wasn't used to having a poverty-stricken cripple as his boss.

...Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. 2 Samuel 9:10b (ESV)

Ziba agreed to follow the king's orders. Later we will see he wasn't happy about them and he schemed to change them. For now, he obeyed them.

Then Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king commands his servant, so will your servant do."... 2 Samuel 9:11a (ESV)

Notice what happens next.

...So Mephibosheth ate at David's table, like one of the king's sons. 2 Samuel 9:11 (ESV)

The emphasis is that Mephibosheth was treated like one of David's own sons. He was adopted into the family.

Kindness Experienced

And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Mica.... 2 Samuel 9:12a (ESV)

Either David knew this or soon came to know this. This is significant because this son of Mephibosheth represented a future for King Saul's bloodline. Later we read of Mica's offspring. They can be traced in the Bible until the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians. Their genealogy is found in 1 Chronicles 8 and 9. They became leaders in the tribe of Benjamin.

...And all who lived in Ziba's house became Mephibosheth's servants. 2 Samuel 9:12b (ESV)

If our suspicions about Ziba's character are correct, he is unhappy about having King Saul's vast farm run by a cripple who formerly lived in the desert.

So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem,... 2 Samuel 9:13a (ESV)

No longer did he live in Lo-debar, in the land of nowhere, but he lived in the capital city of Jerusalem. He went from obscurity and poverty to a beautiful city in luxury.

...for he ate always at the king's table... 2 Samuel 9:13b (ESV)

This point is repeated to emphasize the point. Mephibosheth is adopted in David's family.

Now he was lame in both his feet. 2 Samuel 9:13c (ESV)

As we said earlier, while David tried to reverse everything in Mephibosheth's life, the one thing he couldn't reverse was the fact that he was a cripple in his feet. The good news is King Jesus is so good that in eternity he will reverse every effect sin impressed on our life, he will even heal the cripples. That is the great kindness of King Jesus.

Applications

1. **Like David, we are to be men and women who keep our promises.** David kept the promises he made to Saul and to Jonathan even though the promises he made to them were almost 15 to 20 years before this time. Just as David was a man of his word, in spite of changing circumstances, we are to be men and women who keep our word in spite of changes around us. A classic example of keeping a loving and loyal promise is a marriage

commitment. It is a promise to have and to hold, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to death do us part. When it is hard to keep our promise, that is when our character is tested. Our goal in the promise of marriage is not just to avoid a divorce but to love, honor, and cherish someone, instead of just tolerating them. Marriage is just one example of what it means for us to be men and women who keep our word. The promises we make to one another in church membership is another example. We promise to attend regularly, to give faithfully, and to serve cheerfully.

- 2. David's undeserved kindness to Mephibosheth is a picture of God's undeserved kindness to us.** Mephibosheth was intended to be the grandson of the king, but he lost it all through Saul's sin. Like Mephibosheth, we lost our position with God through Adam's sin. Mephibosheth became a cripple through no fault of his own. He was forced to live as an outcast through no fault of his own. Mephibosheth was a pitiable helpless man who couldn't do anything to save himself. That is a good picture of us. We were also crippled by sin, an outcast from God's presence, with nothing we could do to save ourselves. Just as David set out to find Mephibosheth and show him kindness he didn't deserve, God set out through Jesus to show us kindness we didn't deserve. Just as David took Mephibosheth from having nothing to giving him everything when he put him over the vast wealth and land of Saul's family, in a similar way, through Jesus, God took us from having nothing to becoming the most blessed beings in the universe with the vast

riches of God's blessings for all eternity. All the delight God the Father has in Jesus, his son, is the delight we will experience for all of eternity because we are now so closely identified with Jesus. Just as David adopted Mephibosheth into his own family, we were adopted into the family of God, brothers, and sisters of Jesus our King.

- 3. As Mephibosheth was filled with humility and gratitude for David's underserved kindness, we should be filled with greater humility and gratitude for God's undeserved kindness to us.** While we don't see it in this chapter, as we continue our study, we will see the kindness of David deeply touched Mephibosheth. He became a different person. He was a person filled with humility and gratitude for the rest of his life because of what the kindness of the king had done for him. In the same way, our lives should be marked by the undeserved kindness King Jesus has shown to us, which is far greater than any kindness David could show to Mephibosheth. We should live lives of humility and gratitude because we have been marked forever by the kindness of our king.



Dr. Kurt Trucksess is ordained in the Evangelical Free Church of America. He enjoys reading, writing, and time with his family. Feel free to contact him at www.Christ2RCulture.com (www.c2rc.com)

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