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Leadership and the Grace of God

Courage to Lead Series

1 Kings 1:1-53

Pastor Bryan Clark

Several times in our series through 1and 2 Samuel we've wrestled with the question: what is God's part and what is my part? Any serious Christ-follower wrestles with this question. Some of us lean toward the self-sufficient side. It's not that we're wanting to do something bad or wrong or sinful; as a matter of fact, it's just the opposite. We're trying to accomplish the mission. We're trying to do the right thing, but there's a tendency to go out ahead of God and do it in our own strength and power, and hope God catches up and blesses it. That's certainly the direction I lean. Others kind of lean toward the passive side—the tendency to kind of spiritualize their passivity under the umbrella of the sovereignty of God, and I can just kind of "let go and let God" and somehow be passive, and it's all going to work out. That is not a good biblical theology at all, so one more time in our series, we're going to wrestle with the question: what is God's part and what is my part? So if you have a Bible, turn with us to 1 Kings, Chapter 1. This week is 1 Kings 1; next week 1 Kings 2, and then we're done with our series.

Last we left the story, chronologically, would have been 2 Samuel chapter 20. David is back in Jerusalem as king. Sheba's tried to lead a rebellion. Joab kills Amasa, takes over the army, takes care of Sheba, and that's kind of where the story ends. Clearly time has passed. David is now seventy years of age, and he's in the final weeks or months of his life, as we pick it up in verse 1:

> **Now King David was old, advanced in age; and they covered him with clothes, but he could not keep warm. So his servants said to him, "Let them seek a young virgin for my lord the king, and let her attend the king and become his nurse; and let her lie in your bosom, that my lord the king may keep warm." So they searched for a beautiful girl throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king. The girl was very beautiful; and she became the king's nurse and served him, but the king did not cohabit with her.** (2 Kings 1:1-4)

So David is old; he's nearing the end of his life, and as often happens, they can't get him warm. They try blankets and clothes and so they do what seems very odd to us, but actually was very common in the ancient Near East. They go out and find a young virgin—meaning it's not a married woman—who comes, functions as his care-taker or nurse, but also includes crawling into bed with him simply to help keep him warm. Now that may seem strange to us, but even in the 1st century Roman Empire, Josephus, the historian, talks about this as a legitimate medical practice. The text makes a point to tell us this was not a sexual relationship; it was just trying to keep him warm until he dies. I think the point of the text here is David is old and dying—the end is near.

> **Now Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king." So he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen with fifty men to run before him. His father had never crossed him at any time by asking, "Why have you done so?" And he was also a very handsome man, and he was born after Absalom. He had conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest; and following Adonijah they helped him. But Zadok the priest, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and the mighty men who belonged to David, were not with**

Adonijah. Adonijah sacrificed sheep and oxen and fatlings by the stone of Zoheleth, which is beside En-rogel; and he invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah, the king's servants. But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, and Solomon his brother. (Vs.5-10)

So, introduce Adonijah: Adonijah's the fourth son of David, but he's the oldest living son. The first one was Amnon who raped his sister Tamar, and was killed by Absalom. There's one, Chileab—who we know little about—probably just died early in life. The third one was Absalom who was put to death in his attempt to take the throne. So now you're down to the fourth son, Adonijah. The text goes out of its way to compare Adonijah with Absalom—basically two peas in a pod. The language is almost identical in several places. Where it says he **exalted himself**, the Hebrew grammar is *continually, all the time*. In other words, just like Absalom, he was continuously setting himself up as the next king of Israel. What he was doing with horses and chariots and runners is identical to Absalom. He's compared in terms of being handsome, and was the next one born after Absalom. All that is inviting the reader to make a comparison to what they did and how it turned out.

The other thing that's interesting about this particular text is it tells us that David, as his father, **never crossed him**. That's kind of an unfortunate translation. The idea is he never restrained him, never really disciplined him—just basically spoiled him and let him act like this. One of the things that's interesting about David is David was a great king. David was a courageous warrior, but David was a lousy father. David was a lousy father to Amnon, which then turned out to allow Amnon to rape his sister Tamar. He was a lousy father to Tamar in his unwillingness to deal with the situation. He was a lousy father with Absalom that led to a revolution, and the text actually tells us he was a lousy father with Adonijah. When you look at the David story, the truth is the greatest pain and struggle and suffering in David's life did not come from his enemies outside the border, it came from within his own home because he was a highly ineffective father. So that sets up, then, the story of Adonijah.

The text also tells us who is on whose side. So with Adonijah is Joab. Joab probably just calculated the odds and went with Adonijah. We're also told that Abiathar is on his side. Abiathar was one of the two priests—Zadok and Abiathar—that came out of Jerusalem with the ark when David was fleeing Jerusalem as Absalom was coming into Jerusalem. Abiathar goes all the way back to when Saul slaughtered the priests at Nob and he was the one survivor, made it to David, and was with David in the wilderness. So he's been with David a long, long time, but for whatever reason here late in the story, he sides with Adonijah. Those that were not on Adonijah's side would be Zadok, the other priest, Benaiah (if you remember him, 2nd Samuel 23, was listed in the honor roll of mighty warriors, and I made a comment that week, "Remember that name; it will come up again"), and then Shimei who was the one that cursed and threw things at David, but when David came back to Jerusalem, he confessed that as sin, and asked for forgiveness from David. And we don't know who Rei is at all.

They gather outside the southeast corner of Jerusalem, probably half a mile away-ish, at the **stone of Zoheleth**, could be translated *the serpent stone*. Some people think this was a place where they worshipped the serpent god of the Philistines, and it may be a little bit of insight into the spiritual beliefs of Adonijah. In verse 10 where it tells us Nathan the prophet and Benaiah and Solomon were not invited to this gathering, the significance of that is that in the ancient Near East, if you were the host and you invited guests, it was your moral responsibility to protect your guests. The fact that these three were not invited is indicative of the fact that Adonijah fully intended to kill them when he was king. So that's kind of the point of that particular detail. Verse 11:

Then Nathan spoke to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, "Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king, and David our lord does not know *it*? So now come, please let me give you counsel and save your life and the life of your son Solomon. Go at once to King David and say to him, 'Have you not, my lord, O king, sworn to your maidservant, saying, "Surely Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne"? Why then has Adonijah become king?' "Behold, while you are still there speaking with the king, I will come in after you and confirm your words." So Bathsheba went in to the king in the bedroom. Now the king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was ministering to the king. Then Bathsheba bowed and prostrated herself before the king. And the king said, "What do you wish?" She said to him, "My lord, you swore to your maidservant by the LORD your God, *saying*, 'Surely your son Solomon shall be king after me and he shall sit on my throne.' Now, behold, Adonijah is king; and now, my lord the king, you do not know *it*. He has sacrificed oxen and fatlings and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the sons of the king and Abiathar the priest and Joab the commander of the army, but he has not invited Solomon your servant. As for you now, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, to tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. Otherwise it will come about, as soon as my lord the king sleeps with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon will be considered offenders. (Vs. 11-21)

So this is very interesting. This is the first time since 2nd Samuel chapter 11 that Bathsheba's been a main player and the first real dialog out of her mouth. In chapter 11 she said, "I am pregnant," and that's all. So now we have a significant dialog, and she actually is presented as a very skillful, thoughtful, godly woman. Nathan knows the will of God. Bathsheba knows the will of God. David knows the will of God. So now there's this moment where Adonijah is making a play for the throne. It would be easy to just sit back—but we know God promised it should be Solomon—so let's just "let go and let God" and see what happens. But rather, there is this very active action consistent with the will of God. So Nathan steps it up and says to Bathsheba, this is what's going on, this is what we need to do, and kind of gives her the script and basically is seeking to save her life and the life of her son. Bathsheba goes before David; her words are actually stronger than the script that Nathan gave her, and the idea that, "David, you, yourself vowed that Solomon would be the next king in Israel." Here's what's going on, and if you don't step up and do something, both Bathsheba and Solomon are dead. It's a very dramatic moment in the story. Verse 22:

Behold, while she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in. They told the king, saying, "Here is Nathan the prophet." And when he came in before the king, he prostrated himself before the king with his face to the ground. Then Nathan said, "My lord the king, have you said, 'Adonijah shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne'? For he has gone down today and has sacrificed oxen and fatlings and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king's sons and the commanders of the army and Abiathar the priest, and behold, they are eating and drinking before him; and they say, '*Long* live King Adonijah!' But me, *even* me your servant, and Zadok the priest and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and your servant Solomon, he has not invited. Has this thing been done by my lord the king, and you have not shown to your servants who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?" (Vs. 22-27)

So according to the plan, Nathan comes in and basically goes through the same details. It's very skillfully done; it's very respectfully done but it's also done in such a way to move David to action. Adonijah is clearly being an Absalom; he's trying to take over the kingdom, and very skillfully

Nathan says, "*Is this true, that you as the King set up Adonijah to be king, and you didn't tell your priest and you didn't tell your prophet, and that's really what you've done?"* in order to move David into action. Again, what's happening in this text is there is God's part and there is David's part and Nathan's part and Solomon's part. They know what God's will is. It's not enough just to sit back and say, "God is sovereign; it will all work out." We've seen this again and again and again in this series—that somehow there is this tension between a sovereign God and the actions His people take. David has made very good choices with very good consequences and some terrible choices with very terrible consequences. Somehow there is this interplay between a sovereign God and the decisions we make as the people of God. So Nathan, Bathsheba, and David all move into action.

It's important to understand that there's always something that is our part. There is never a moment as a Christian when our role is to passively sit by and watch. Sometimes what God is asking of us is to pray with fervency. Sometimes God is saying, "Wait!" Sometimes God is saying, "Believe!" Sometimes God is saying, "Trust!" But none of those are passive. It's not this passive, fatalistic, sit back; it will all work out attitude. Whether it's prayer, or belief, or trust, or waiting, these are intentional understandings that this is what God has called me to at this moment, and with great discipline and great passion we pray or we believe or we trust or we wait, but in that moment we understand: right now, this is my part! But it's equally true that sometimes God is saying, "I want you to *do* something, not to just sit by passively and watch this happen!" There are times when we *know* the right thing to do; we *know* what God wants us to do; we *know* what God's will is, and we have to have the faith and the courage to step up and do our part. And that's a big part of what's happening in this story. Verse 28:

> **Then King David said, "Call Bathsheba to me." And she came into the king's presence and stood before the king. The king vowed and said, "As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from all distress, surely as I vowed to you by the LORD the God of Israel, saying, 'Your son Solomon shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place'; I will indeed do so this day." Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the ground, and prostrated herself before the king and said, "May my lord King David live forever."** (Vs. 28-31)

So David calls Bathsheba in. He again confirms that is the vow; that is God's will. David is not saying that Solomon will be king after I die. David is saying, *"Solomon will be king today*!" Solomon will replace David on the throne that very day. There are two key moments, or two key statements in that paragraph: Verse 29, when David says, "**As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life from all distress,"** this is a critical statement. It tracks us all the way back to 1Samuel with the cave story, the incident with Nabal and Abigail, and the second cave story. If you were with us at that point in the story, I pointed out that I believe that was a significant turning point for David, who had the tendency toward self-sufficiency. David had good motives. He wanted to do the right thing, but he did tend towards dependence upon himself. So the first cave story was David *almost* killing Saul, then was convicted about that, followed by the Nabal/Abigail story, where David *almost* acted like Saul and slaughtered Nabal and his men in innocent blood. But Abigail, in her wisdom stopped him, and David basically confessed that he'd learned something—that he has to trust God. There's God's part and there's his part. It was a turning point for David in the wilderness.

The second cave story is clearly an indication David had learned this lesson, and had no intention of killing Saul, and was determined to wait on God. That then jumped us to 2 Samuel chapter 4 with the killing of Saul's son, Ishbosheth. You remember the story. David is king in the South, and he is waiting for God's perfect timing to make him king over the North, over Israel. So God had all but

worked out the details, and then these two hoodlums by the name of Rechab and Baanah step up. They kill Ishbosheth in cold blood while he's sleeping. They come to David thinking they're going to get some sort of a prize, and David makes this exact statement: "**As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life from all distress."** David had learned that he must trust God and God will deliver him and put him on the throne when it's God's time. So that David would repeat this phrase exactly in this moment, at the end of his life, is saying again what he's come to understand is there's God's part and there's his part, and he understands this is God's will that Solomon sit on the throne. God will accomplish His will, but David has a responsibility to act, and that's exactly what he's going to do.

The other thing that's worth noting is the statement that Bathsheba makes at the end of the paragraph. **"May my lord King David live forever."** It does seem to give an indication that Bathsheba understood the covenant promise that was made between God and David, that David's throne would endure forever. How much she understood the details of that is hard to say, but she clearly understands that she, Bathsheba, that her son, Solomon, would somehow be in this line of David that would endure forever. It is just a remarkable statement of faith in that moment.

> **Then King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." And they came into the king's presence. The king said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have my son Solomon ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. Let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there as king over Israel, and blow the trumpet and say, '*Long* live King Solomon!' Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne and be king in my place; for I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah." Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, "Amen! Thus may the LORD, the God of my lord the king, say. As the LORD has been with my lord the king, so may He be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David!" So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride on King David's mule, and brought him to Gihon. Zadok the priest then took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, "*Long* live King Solomon!" All the people went up after him, and the people were playing on flutes and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth shook at their noise.** (Vs. 32-40)

So David's plan is: get the two main players—the prophet and the priest—get Solomon, put him on the king's mule—that would be far more indicative of being king than what Adonijah was doing. Have them go to Gihon, which is maybe a quarter of a mile from where all this stuff is going on with Adonijah, so close enough to clearly be in hearing distance, just on the southeast corner of Jerusalem. It's a well-known kind of watering hole. Gather there and, at that place anoint Solomon King; blow the shofar; have this parade back to Jerusalem, as he wants him to actually sit on the throne that day. So that's what they do. The plan is carried out. You have to realize this is a once-every-forty-year occasion, so the people are having a great celebration—so loud is the party that the earth shakes!

Now Adonijah and all the guests who *were* with him heard *it* as they finished eating. When Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, "Why is the city making such an uproar?" While he was still speaking, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came. Then Adonijah said, "Come in, for you are a valiant man and bring good news." But Jonathan replied to Adonijah, "No! Our lord King David has made Solomon king. The king has also sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites; and they have made him ride on the king's mule. Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon, and they have come up from there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This is the noise which you have heard. Besides, Solomon has even taken his seat on the throne of the kingdom. Moreover, the king's servants came to bless our lord King David, saying, 'May your God make the name of Solomon better than your name and his throne greater than your throne!' And the king bowed himself on the bed. The king has also said thus, 'Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who has granted one to sit on my throne today while my own eyes see *it*.'" (Vs. 41-48)

So Adonijah and Joab hear the ruckus. They wonder what's going on. Joab specifically hears the shofar, which makes sense, as that would be blown if they were under attack, so the general clearly would be tuned into that. But it also was blown if there was a significant celebration. So they both know something big is up. Jonathan is the son of Abiathar. He's one of the two sons that left from Jerusalem and took the message to David when Absalom was in Jerusalem to tell him what Absalom was up to. So Jonathan's kind of been a player on both sides. Now he shows up to deliver news to Adonijah.

It's very interesting what Adonijah says, because it's almost identical to what David said back when David was engaged in the battle against Absalom. If you remember the scene, he's sitting at the gate; he's waiting for a messenger to bring news, and he's hoping beyond reason that somehow the news will be good. He sees Ahimaaz running, and if you remember the statement, he says, "He's a good man, so it must be good news." The logic of that makes no sense; it's just a pitiful attempt to convince himself, surely there's still some good news left in the story. This is almost identical as Adonijah sees it's Jonathan, "*He's a valiant man; that means he must bring good news*." Inside he's thinking, *"I think this has really turned out badly*." So Jonathan shows up and says, "Actually it's really bad news. David's the king and David has anointed Solomon. He's on his mule; he's already been anointed; the people are celebrating; he's already sitting on the throne." So in essence what Jonathan says is, "...and you are in so much trouble."

Then all the guests of Adonijah were terrified; and they arose and each went on his way. And Adonijah was afraid of Solomon, and he arose, went and took hold of the horns of the altar. Now it was told Solomon, saying, "Behold, Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon, for behold, he has taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.'" Solomon said, "If he is a worthy man, not one of his hairs will fall to the ground; but if wickedness is found in him, he will die." So King Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and prostrated himself before King Solomon, and Solomon said to him, "Go to your house." (Vs. 49-53)

So Adonijah now realizes he's in big trouble. The people scatter. He's fearful that Solomon is going to do to him what *he* fully intended to do to Solomon. So he runs to the altar and he grabs the horn on one of the corners. Basically the altar had four horns, one at each corner, and the law stated

that if you were somehow being pursued, you had the right to go to the altar, to grab the horn, and to basically find refuge until it could be sorted out and determined if you were guilty or innocent. So that's what he's doing. That's his place of refuge. He goes, grabs the horn, and he wants Solomon to swear that he will not put him to death. Solomon basically says, "*If you're righteous, you'll live; if you're wicked, you'll die."* Adonijah's brought before King Solomon. Adonijah bows before Solomon. Solomon gives him some *timeout* in his house and says, "You go home. You go home until I tell you, you can leave." So what we have is Adonijah under house arrest. Will he live or will he die? We have Solomon as king. We have David on his deathbed. We have Joab as certainly a wildcard and a lot of loose ends that will all be resolved in some way next week in the final chapter.

So for this week, what are the lessons for us to learn? The first one is: there's no question that the writer of the text is wanting us to compare Adonijah to Absalom. There are multiple reminders of that in the text, which then takes us back to Saul. So you have these principal characters in this long story that remind us: you can't fight God and win. No matter what Absalom did, no matter what Adonijah did, there was virtually no way they were ever going to be king, because God is sovereign and God had a plan, and ultimately God always wins.

So there is this simple but profound message: You simply can't fight God and win which kind of rolls over into the next discussion—but that doesn't mean because God is sovereign that we just sit back and kick up our feet and wait and watch for God to do everything. There is no place in the Bible where we are encouraged to just take a passive role. You can't allow the sovereignty of God to turn into some sort of fatalism, where everything's going to happen because it's going to happen, and really there's nothing we can do but wait and watch. So there's been this constant tension throughout these stories—that there is God's part and there is our part.

In this story there was the reminder that Nathan knew God's will; Bathsheba knew God's will; David knew God's will, and they had a responsibility to act on that. There's a verse in the New Testament, James 4:17, that says: *"For he who knows to do the will of God and chooses not to do it, to him it is sin."* When you know what God is calling you to do, when you know what the right thing is, you don't sit back passively and just hope God somehow works it out. We have a moral responsibility to step up, to have some courage, to take action and to do what we know to be the right thing, which is illustrated in this story by Nathan, by Bathsheba, by David, and even by Solomon. So we're reminded that maybe what God is asking of you is to pray. Maybe He's asking you to believe. Maybe He's asking you to trust. Maybe He's asking you to just wait. But none of those are passive. None of those are "let go and let God". They're all very intentional, active things that we do. With all of our heart and our passion, we pray. With all of our heart and passion we trust, or we believe, or we wait, but we know in that moment, this is what God's asking me to do right now. But sometimes we know what God is asking is for me to act, and I do my part and trust that God will do His part.

We also are clearly reminded that the last time we saw the players Nathan, Bathsheba, David, and Solomon, was back in 2 Samuel chapters 11 and 12. One of the most disastrous moments in the David story, when David committed adultery with Bathsheba, he then went on and had relations with Bathsheba again and that brought forth Solomon, who was promised to be the next king of Israel. There are several places in this story where this business with David is conducted in the bedroom. It's not conducted in the throne room. David is now on his deathbed. It's interesting that Bathsheba and Nathan are coming into the bedroom to negotiate this action, which all takes us back to the disaster of chapters 11 and 12. But this very impressive God-inspired moment in 1st Kings

chapter one is the reminder that failure is never final—that just because we biff it doesn't mean we're off the team, doesn't mean we're sent to the bench, doesn't mean God can't ever use us. Bathsheba is presented in this chapter as a very godly, impressive woman of action, and there is a clear sense that even though what happened before was disastrous, that that isn't the end of the story. And in this part of the story, Nathan, David, Solomon, Bathsheba are all presented as impressive, God-honoring people in the story.

One of the things that's critical to remember—what ultimately will define the trajectory of your life—is not necessarily whether you biff it or not. We're all going to blow it and make mistakes. The moment of truth is when your sin is exposed, what you do in that moment is what's going to ultimately define the trajectory of your life. Whether you're able to accept the grace and the forgiveness and the mercy of Jesus and step it up, get back in the game, and trust that God can still use you to be a world-changer—just like He did with Bathsheba and David in this story—is going to ultimately define the trajectory of your life.

And then, ultimately, we are reminded of this beautiful theology that David was a mere shadow, or a type of the perfect King to come. The promise that David's kingdom would endure forever was a reminder that ultimately it would be the Son of David—the Son of God—who would sit on the throne as the King of kings and the Lord of lords, and finally fulfill that longing in our hearts for the perfect King. Jesus would be the fulfillment of that promise, and through His death, burial and resurrection, which we celebrated this morning, he would make it possible to offer salvation to sinful men and women, that we might go from being under the judgment and rejection of God to actually being God's child. But it isn't just that God has offered us a ticket to heaven. In this chapter, we are Solomon and Jesus is David. Jesus doesn't merely offer us a ticket to heaven. He invites us to be His children, and what's included in that is in a very scandalous, unexpected way, He actually invites us to sit on His throne. We are seated with Christ in the heavenlies and lavished with the riches of the King, heirs to the family fortune, just because of the goodness and the grace of God. This reminds us again, as children of God, as heirs to the family fortune, as those who are seated with Christ in the heavenlies—now and forever—that not only is grace scandalous, it is truly amazing.

> *Our Father, we celebrate this morning that failure is not final. No matter what we've done, You have not cast us aside. You have not abandoned us. You have not thrown us off the team. You have not pushed us to the end of the bench. Because of Your grace and forgiveness, You've invited us back into the action, to be part of something that will matter forever. God, You have seated us with Christ in the heavenlies. You have lavished Your riches upon us. You celebrate us more than anyone celebrates us on this earth, and that all gives testimony to the amazing grace that so defines what Jesus has done for us. Lord, may we celebrate today, who we are in Christ. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

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Leadership and the Grace of God

Courage to Lead

I Kings 1:1-53

Pastor Bryan Clark

Opening Discussion

1. Do you tend more toward the self-sufficiency side or passive inaction side when times get hard? Why do you think that is?

2. How do you sort out - in any given circumstance - what is God's part and what is your part?

3. Passivity can be spiritualized as "let go and let God." Yet, nowhere in the Bible are we told to "let go" in a passive sense. Things like waiting, praying, believing or trusting are not "letting go" in a passive sense but intentional decisions based on God's leading. How do you discern whether God wants you to wait, pray, trust or take some action?

Bible Study

1. Read I Kings 1:1-10. What is happening? What are some of the hints in this text that take us back to things we've already experienced in the David story? How do those hints cause us to review some of the past lessons?

2. Read I Kings 1:11-27. This is the only real dialogue out of Bathsheba's mouth other than simply telling David she was pregnant (II Samuel 11). How is she presented as a character in this story? Imagine the journey emotionally from the events of chapter 11 to all that's transpired to this moment intervening for her son whom she believes God wants to be the next King. What is her part and what is God's part?

3. Nathan the prophet has also been in the story from chapter 11 until now. What does he believe to be true and what does he do with that belief?

4. How might James 4:17 fit into the Bathsheba and Nathan story in this chapter? How does this help us determine whether we move to action or not and what action is necessary?

5. Read I Kings 1:28-53. What moved David from inaction to action? What do we learn from this? When do we need to step out and act?

6. There are many similarities in the text between Absalom and Adonijah. What do we learn from them? Can anyone fight God and win?

7. How does this chapter remind us that failure is not final and that God's grace is enough for anyone?

Application

1. What are some practical things you can do to help you sort out what is your part and what is God's part in various circumstances?

2. Is failure final? What past failures do you need to get over to move on? What will be necessary for that to happen?

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