

After God's Heart

“Bringing Back the Glory”

II Samuel 6

Introduction

- We have all had those experiences where we feel like something is missing
 - Maybe when you are packing up the car for a vacation – you think you have everything but you have this sense something is missing
 - That is when I start counting kids
 - We have all had that experience – I don't know what it is, but something is wrong

I remember the night I first taught in this room – they used to not let the youth pastors anywhere near this stage, but Pastor Rob decided to do a Sunday Night series called “postcards of the NT” – and my assignment was the book of Philemon

- and so my Sunday Night was coming up and I studied and studied, prepared and prepared
 - I didn't need notes – they were written on the backside of my eyelids
 - I was ready
 - But I was nervous
- During worship I went to the restroom just to make sure every hair was in place – I had more hair back then so it took a little longer
 - But everything was in place
 - I was ready to teach – but standing there in the restroom I just felt something was wrong
 - But I heard the worship team doing their last song, and so I headed down that hallway

And praise God for Tom Frazee, he was the children's pastor then and he comes out of his office as I walked by – stop Jason, and I looked behind me and there was half a roll of toilet paper stuck to my shoe

- not a square or two, but enough for a small country to be okay in some parts of the world
 - I just imaged walking onto this stage, with that trailing behind me – thank you Tom Frazee
 - But in that restroom – I knew something was wrong, I just didn't know what it was

Well I bring that up because I want you to realize what David is feeling

- David is finally King over Israel – David has been waiting for this moment for 22 years
 - He was around age 15 when Samuel anointed him to be the future King of Israel
 - He spend the next five years serving in Saul's court as his personal worship leader, then later after defeating Goliath, one of Saul's key generals
- But Saul was jealous of David and so then David spends the next 10 years, all of his 20's running from Saul in the wilderness
 - When David was 30, Saul was killed in battle and yet even then only the tribe of Judah made him King as we saw last Wednesday Night
 - And it would be seven more years until the whole nation got on board

So you add that up and you have 22 years – David has been waiting for this moment – He is king, God has given him rest all around from his enemies

- but even though David had everything, He still felt like something was missing - and David connected that feeling with the Ark of God

The Ark of God was that article that represented God's presence in the nation of Israel

- in times past the ark of God was in the holy of holies in the tabernacle, and the glory of God filled that place
 - later David's son Solomon would build a temple and again the ark would be in the holy of Holies and the presence of God would fill that room

But at this time in Israel's history, the ark of God and with it the presence of God was missing in the national life of the nation of Israel

- some of you bible students remember why
 - years before the story we are considering this morning, before Saul was King over Israel – the Philistines were gathering for battle
- And they way outnumbered the children of Israel, so somebody who had obviously just seen the Raiders of the lost Ark got the idea that if they would bring the ark of God into battle, and lift up the lid, those crazy things would fly out and they would win the battle

But the problem was with that idea is the ark of God was not a religious trinket

- was not a lucky rabbits foot – why do we consider a Rabbit's foot lucky? – it wasn't very lucky for that rabbit – as you are wearing his foot around your neck, I don't image that rabbit would be saying – yes – that foot really came in handy for me
 - but anyway – that ark wasn't a lucky trinket – it wasn't to be used in warfare

The problem was Israel was in sin and therefore they could have brought out the ark and every other major historical artifact in their history, they still would have been defeated that day and they were

- and the Philistines not only defeated them, but then they took the ark and brought it to their cities

The Philistines took the ark into the temple of their god Dagon – now understand Dagon was a half man, half fish god statue that the Philistines worshiped – half fish, half man – they were worshiping a Merman, it's crazy what people will worship –

Picture of Starbucks logo

- oh wait – I didn't mean to put that up there – I did that to the Wednesday Night group when we were studying I Samuel chapter 6 where that story appears and I just wanted to bless everyone – anyway

They worshiped this half fish, half man god and then they brought the Ark into their temples saying – not only did we defeat you, we defeated your God

- But every time they brought the ark of God into their temples, the next day they would find Dagon, this half man, half fish, fallen on his side and broken up
 - But instead of repenting and realizing, hey our worship is a little fishy, sorry or instead of realizing the worship of Dagon was staring to flounder – fish, flounder, never mind
 - No instead of that they would just come in and say Dagon-it – and prop up their god up again
- And so God sent them a plague of boils of all things and everywhere the ark would go this would follow

So needless to say eventually no Philistine city wanted the ark and they sent it back to Israel by placing the ark on a new cart, pulled by oxen

- And the ark came to rest in the house of Abinadad where it stayed until years later in this story we have before us this morning
 - David realizes his kingdom is missing something and so he is going to do something about it

Why are we talking about this, this morning??? – Why is this important??? – Because we have the same feeling so often – We miss the presence of God in our lives, in our church's life

- Without a proper relationship with God, man has been missing that since the Garden of Eden

- God created us for fellowship with Him
- To experience His presence, His glory, His Kabod is the Hebrew, the presence of God in our lives

They had it in Eden

- what intimacy, they walked with God in the cool of the day, think of that
 - and that is why when they sinned it says they realized they were naked
- And I really believe that doesn't just have to do with the fact they had no clothes
 - It was the fact Adam was separated from the intimacy, that kabod, the glory of God
 - And He realized something was now missing in his life, something was wrong

And Adam tried to sew fig leaves, but it did nothing to solve the itch in his spirit, nor his body for that matter – but that is a study for another time

- Anyway – man has been trying to regain that which was lost ever since
 - We know something is missing, we know something isn't quite right
 - And so we try to fill the gap, the void
- Maybe before you knew the Lord, hey maybe after you even knew the Lord, you tried to fill it with drugs and sex, relationship after relationship, more toys, more things – that will do it
 - And yet no matter what we try it doesn't work – it doesn't make up for the kabod of God

In fact you know this because as you go through life, in every experience we have, even great things, have with them an ounce of unfulfillment

- I have shared this at youth camps before, so if you have heard this analogy, I apologize, but I think it helps us to see the truth so good
 - But you go back to elementary school and you thought this is lame – one teacher, they make me nap – we didn't know how good we had it – I wished I had paid nap time today – where can I get that job?
 - But they think when I have a locker, when I change classes – this is where my son is - he looks at the Junior high room and they have video games in there and pizza and he thinks when do I get out of children's ministry – then life will be complete

But for those of us who have already walked down that road, it happens and we realize that wasn't it

- your locker won't open, or someone stuffs you into it on the first day, sorry I'm having a personal flashback
 - and you realize this isn't it

And then you think, I know – when I can drive, then life will have purpose and meaning – I don't like being taken everywhere by Mom and Dad

- and then you get your driver's license and I don't know about you – but I know what happened to me, I became my younger sister's chauffeur, I would have to take her everywhere
 - this wasn't it

And then I started to think – well the parents are the problem – when I am on my own and paying my own bills then life will finally be what I expected it to be

- but then you get there and you realize...

It costs money for water to come out of the sink? Are you kidding me? – I thought you just turn the handle, I didn't know a bill came along with that

- and I have turned into my parents – turn those lights off, why is the window open when the air-conditioner is on?
 - Because I realize – living on my own isn't it

And then you single people you start to think – I know what I am missing – I need a women, I need a man – if I was married all of my problems would go away – ha!

- hey listen I have the greatest marriage on the planet, but can I tell that is not true – all of your problems won't go away – you find brand new ones
 - I didn't know leaving cabinet doors open was an issue I struggled with until I got married
 - Listen you put two sinners under the same roof, with the purpose of God to make you holy
 - Its not what you were expecting

So then as a young couple you look at each other and think – I know what we need to bring in the kabod, the glory of God – we need children

- if I had a baby, everything would be perfect
 - now I have three of them – I love them – but you learn right away – that is not what your heart was missing
 - they cry all night – then they grow up and my son when he was being potty trained cries out from the restroom – wipe me! – really is that what I have become (I probably shouldn't have shared that but I have no real discernment)

And we go from one relationship to the other, and even the best things in life we realize – that isn't what my heart was missing – and the reason...

The reason is you were created to find your fulfillment not in a person or position or achievement – you were made to find your fulfillment in Jesus alone

- And David realizes this – he had everything he had ever wanted but he was still missing something and they were missing something nationally
 - And so he decides – I am bringing the ark of God back into Jerusalem – I am bringing back the presence of God
- And maybe you feel like David – you need the presence of God in your life – listen up because in our story we just read, David does it the wrong and the right way and it is very instructive for us

Bringing Back the Presence of God – II Samuel 6

The Wrong way – II Samuel 6:1-8

- David wants to bring back the glory of God into his life and their national life but the first time he goes about it the wrong way
 - What did he do?

Well first of all David employs the wisdom of man, his own and others

- we read in more detailed account of this story in I Chronicles chapter 13 that David talked to every important leader in the nation
 - and normally there is nothing wrong with that, but we never read they sought the Lord
 - They asked counsel of themselves and what David and the guys came up with was
- Let's gets lots of people – 30,000
 - And let's get some choice men
 - **Uzzah whose name means “strength”**
 - **Ahio whose name means “friendly”**
- And they put together the latest tech – a cart – now where did they get that idea?

They got that idea from the Philistines

- it was the world who moved the ark with a cart and some oxen and it worked for them, so it will work for us, the wisdom of man said

And not only all of that but then they got a band together and they started playing – an amazing concert was part of the plan

- there was no way this could fail!
 - And I point this out to you because it so reminds me of where the American church is right now

We realize – We are missing something – we have the greatest buildings, talented speakers, projection systems, podcasts, internet, you name it, we have in the American church

- but in so many places, it seems the presence of God is missing, the kabod, the weight and the glory
 - and so what do we so often do

We get our cart together – remember a cart is basically some boards and some big wheels

- and we get our boards together, our smartest men and women and our big wheels start spinning, we start planning

We need a crowd, a packed sanctuary and to get there we need some key guys

- a strong man like Uzzah – a strong leader who can drive the cart, whose personality can take us there and then not only that guy but we also need Ahio
 - Mr. friendly and he can go out front – and greet the people and sing and dance and make everyone feel good

And then we will use the latest tech – the cart, that the world used – we will learn from Apple its changing the world and we will realize, hey if it worked for Apple, it will work for us

And then as a final touch, we need musicians, who can create the right mood for the presence of God

- And if we get all that right – we can't lose – we will bring back the presence of God
 - And I can't tell you how many "doing church" books and seminars go just like that

And it's not just for the church as a whole, but for us as individuals

- oh you are missing the presence of God – well if you will just read this book and do this 40 day program, then you can't miss

That is what David and the leaders of Israel were thinking, but then verse 6, they come to Nachon's threshing floor

- now does anyone remember what happened at a threshing floor in biblical times?
 - It was where they would separate the wheat from the chaff and that is exactly what God does there as well
 - Heavy, heavy lesson for David and us

No don't misunderstand me – some of you are thinking wait a second, lots of people, friendly folks, great music, tech – that sounds like a meeting I have been in with you, you want that stuff in the church

- yes – please don't misunderstand me
 - in no way am I saying that God doesn't or can't or won't use tech, friendly people (Jesus was friendly) – or even strong personalities and talented worship teams – of course He will
 - and I'm not saying – that personally He can't use whatever the latest and great book or 40 day program that make their way through the church – of course He can and does

I am not opposed to learning from the world, adopting methods from others – or being friendly – Lord knows we need that

- what I am saying – and please listen, please listen – what I am saying is – sometimes churches and individuals use those outward things to mask a greater problem, the same problem David was facing
 - and that is a departure from the what the Word of God says brings in His presence

Because either we don't know or don't want to know what the Word has to say about revival and bringing back His presence, we so often in church culture today bring in boards and big wheels, and strong personalities and dynamic worship and the latest and the greatest

- you see David thought and asked advice of the leaders of Israel

- but all the while – God in His word had a very specific way to move the ark
- why back in the book of Numbers – you remember that book – who would want to read a book called Numbers unless you are an accountant
- but in that book God says – that priests were to carry the ark, not a cart and they were to go six steps and worship and then six more step and worship
 - and it wasn't a very efficient way to move the ark, but it was a very efficient way to bring in the presence of God
- and after three months of praying, seeking the Word and the Lord

Bringing Back the Presence of God – II Samuel 6

The Wrong way – II Samuel 6:1-8

The Right way – II Samuel 6:9-15

- I Chronicles 15 – David sought the Lord and realized

There was a way in the Word that God prescribed for bringing in His glory

- and David did it God's way and the glory of the Lord returned to the nation of Israel
 - and I mention this to you today again not to say that books we read and programs we go to can't be used by the Lord – of course they can

But we need to remember, that just like with David, God has prescribed in His Word what to do when you sense there is a distance between you and God

- Do you sense that this morning
 - Listen no boards or big wheels are going to help you
 - But in Isaiah 59 God says...

“The Lord's hand is not short that He cannot save you. Nor is His ear heavy that He cannot hear, but your sins have separated you from God.” – Isaiah 59:1-2

- oh we don't like to talk this way in our church culture today
 - if I feel down and that God is distant – Its not me!
 - It's the church I go to – time to change
 - It's my diet – too much gluten gets in the way of God
 - It's something I need to take or do
- Hey maybe you just need to repent
 - God says –My arms aren't short – I don't have T-Rex arms – My ears aren't heavy that I don't hear you
 - Your sins have created the distance between me and you – so repent

I love how David prays – search my heart God, see if there be any unclean thing within me – I don't even get through that prayer and God – yep there it is – we all have things

And we need to repent and get right with God

- yes even in the age of Grace
 - grace is why you are still breathing - but just because there is grace doesn't mean there does not need to be real humble repentance before the Lord on a regular basis
 - how long has it been – since you have let God search your heart and repent

So we repent and, you want to draw near to God – again in His Word, God says in the New Testament – James 4

“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.” – James 4:8

- Draw near to Him, and He will draw near to you
 - How do I do that
 - In His Word – listen not in a legalistic way but I want you to experience this – I go through things, I don't know what direction to go and then I read and I feel like I am the only one on the planet – who doesn't want their emotions, their spouses emotions, their kids emotions run through the grid of God's word
 - Let's challenge each other - Pastor Rob was asking me what do you remember about your first time here – and I said, you would randomly call on us to ask what we were reading – and I started reading consistently because I didn't want to

sound lame when you called on me – challenge each other in your family – its good

Draw near to Him – in the Word – in prayer

- do you pray??? – well I'm a Christian of course I pray – oh stop it
 - listen this is what God is doing in me right now – I pray and it usually goes like this – here is what I need, here is what I want, my feelings

And as we have been studying David's life, the Lord has been challenging me

- David, Abraham, these men were sinners just like us, but God calls them friends – why
 - Could it be because they asked the Lord – how are you doing – just consider the way they pray – should I go to this city, what do you think
 - Listen we all have that friend that all they talk about is themselves and after you are done hearing them – you just think – I'm good too, thanks – its exhausting
- And I'm not saying the Lord is petty like me – but maybe He calls David and Abraham friends because they were the very few who would said – Lord how are you today – how do you feel
 - More than seeking His hand – we need to seek His face

Draw near to God in His Word, in prayer, in worship

- oh I shared this the other Wednesday night but about 15 of you were here the night of the fires – music is designed to affect you emotionally
 - Country music is designed to make you sad – the dog dies, the women leaves – I listen to that and I want to end it all
- Pop music is designed to seduce you – my wife and I were in Costa Rica and there was music playing in the background at the hotel and after about 20 minutes I just felt so dirty as everything was about hooking up and being physical
 - Country music is designed to make you sad
 - Pop music is designed to seduce you
- My country music doesn't make me sad – well all that means is Taylor Swift is really more pop than county – thanks for solving that argument

Country makes you sad, Pop seduces you, metal makes you angry and worship is designed to draw you into the presence of God – exactly what we are talking about

- and so I hope a huge portion of your iPod, CD collection, some of you still on tapes, is dedicated to worship
 - what are you saying I can't listen to that other stuff – of course you can
 - if you want to be sad and seduced and angry, you listen to whatever you want
- But if you realize – I need the presence of God in my life – then no amount of board and big wheels is going to make up for the basics of repentance and getting in the Word, praying, worshipping
 - Let's bring in the glory of God His way

Now that leaves us with a choice

- how are we going to respond
 - you see not everyone will be excited about this message
 - David comes home to minister to his family – mark that dads, moms, grandparents – after you are done conquering the world – your job is not done – your family needs the presence of God

David comes home but Michal and you have to say with the Jewish accent or it sounds like David is married to a dude

- but Michal doesn't appreciate David leaping and whirling before the Lord – not at all
 - she says – that is not how a king acts – now where would she get that idea – well there has only been one other King – her Dad and Saul was all about the show – what other people think – and that is a challenge

A couple weeks ago someone was talking to me and they said, you know some just don't appreciate your act, you are like a dancing monkey up on that stage

- and I think his point was that I get a little excited when I teach, I don't know what he is talking about
 - but at first I was really affected by that because I have great respect for this pulpit
 - I was married in this room on this stage– I have cleaned this room over and over again – I have grown up spiritually listening to studies from this pulpit – I have a great respect for this stage
- And it has been a constant battle for me for the three years I have been back from Texas, because I know, I know I'm different than Brian Brodersen in teaching style, I know I'm different than Rob Salvato in teaching style – and I'm okay with that – but I never want to take away from what those great men have done in this room
 - So when I hear 'dancing monkey' – that is not the goal I'm shooting for

But I went to the beach and talked it over with the Lord and you know what – I don't care – because Jesus is my King and He is coming again soon – and it's for Him that we live and move and have our being

- this act, and it's not an act, but it's not for you – I'm excited about Jesus and His Word and how they change lives
 - and I hope you are too
 - I hope you are willing to humble yourself before the Lord and repent if need be, run your wisdom through His in the word, daily, talk things over with Him worship Him
- David was willing to strip off his royal robes, because it wasn't about what others thought of him, it was about what God thought of Him

But what about you and me?

- do we come and humble ourselves before the Lord
 - or no Jason – I am branch manager – that is below me – strip off your regal robes
 - I graduated from the UC system – that type of religiosity is for those who don't have my educational prowess – oh strip off your regal robes
- The Book of Psalms says Clap your hands all you people, come let us worship and bow down all you people, except UC grads or managers, no, all you people
 - How long has it been since you lifted your hands in worship
 - Why would I do that?
- It communicates something to God
 - Hands up – surrender – how I need that
 - Hands extended – like a toddler, pick me up – maybe you need that

But right now we are going to close in worship

- and what I don't mean by that is the band is going to play some music while you leave
 - I mean it is time for us to take 10 minutes and response to the King of King and Lord of Lord
 - To worship the name that is higher than every other name – Jesus!
- We need your presence God
 - And if you want to stand – stand
 - If you want to come up front and kneel, kneel
 - If you want to lift your hand, lift your hand
 - If you want to sit, sit – but let's worship our King
 - Let's pray!