

The Courage to Cope

September 6, 2009 Pastor Bill Bump

Our subject: David

Pressure and adversity have a way of bringing to the surface the best that is in a person if they know how to respond, and that was certainly true of David.

David's start:

I Samuel 17:49,50a (NLT) Reaching into his shepherd's bag and taking out a stone, he hurled it from his sling and hit the Philistine in the forehead. The stone sank in, and Goliath stumbled and fell face downward to the ground. So David triumphed over the Philistine giant with only a stone and sling...

But because of Saul's paranoid rage, David had to live the life of a hunted fugitive.

I Samuel 18:7-9 (NLT) This was their song: "Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands!" This made Saul very angry. "What's this?" he said. "They credit David with ten thousands and me with only thousands. Next they'll be making him their king!" So from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David.

I Samuel 19:10 (NLT) Saul hurled his spear at David in an attempt to kill him. But David dodged out of the way and escaped into the night, leaving the spear stuck in the wall.

I Samuel 20:31 (NLT) [Saul speaking to his son Jonathan] "As long as that son of Jesse is alive, you'll never be king. Now go and get him so I can kill him!"

With a quality I call 'the courage to cope', David proceeded to make wise use of the hand life was dealing him.

Even after David seems to have it made, his struggles continue:

II Samuel 11:2-4,14-17 (NLT) Late one afternoon David got out of bed after taking a nap and went for a stroll on the roof of the palace. As he looked out over the city, he noticed a woman of unusual beauty taking a bath. He sent someone to find out who she was, and he was told, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." Then David sent for her; and when she came to the palace, he slept with her...So the next morning David wrote a letter to Joab and gave it to Uriah to deliver. The letter instructed Joab, "Station Uriah on the front lines where the battle is fiercest. Then pull back so that he will be killed." So Joab assigned Uriah to a spot

close to the city wall where he knew the enemy's strongest men were fighting. And Uriah was killed along with several other Israelite soldiers.

II Samuel 13:28,29 (NLT) Absalom told his men, "Wait until Amnon gets drunk; then at my signal, kill him!..." So at Absalom's signal they murdered Amnon...

II Samuel 15:9b,10 (NLT) ...So Absalom went to Hebron. But while he was there, he sent secret messengers to every part of Israel to stir up a rebellion against the king. "As soon as you hear the trumpets," his message read, "you will know that Absalom has been crowned king in Hebron."

At no time was the highly successful David ever free of pressure or difficulty; there were no 'smooth seas' in his lifetime.

This thing called 'the courage to cope' is a much needed reality for each of us.

FINDING THE COURAGE TO COPE

Review of Isaiah's crisis from last week:

Isaiah 6:1-4 (NLT) In the year King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the Temple. Hovering around him were mighty seraphim, each with six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with the remaining two they flew. In a great chorus they sang, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty! The whole earth is filled with his glory!" The glorious singing shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire sanctuary was filled with smoke.

To call God holy meant that He was utterly different from anything else. God is all powerful, all knowing, and always present.

David saw himself as belonging to God and being God's instrument. This was the source of his 'courage to cope'.

Psalm 100:3-5 (NLT) Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us, and we are his. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and bless his name. For the Lord is good. His unfailing love continues forever, and his faithfulness continues to each generation.

Psalm 103:1-4 (NLT) Praise the Lord, I tell myself; with my whole heart, I will praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, I tell myself, and never forget the good things he does for me. He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He ransoms me from death and surrounds me with love and tender mercies.