

# Whose side are you on?

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[0:00] Do you ever give reviews on TripAdvisor or Google? For some reason Google seems extraordinarily interested in what I made of it when I went to McDonald's! Or how many stars I'd give it.

I always find that giving stars on reviews quite difficult because out of five stars sometimes it's a very black and white thing. You say, well, five stars or no stars? You know, football team, this is the best five stars or it's absolute rubbish.

You know, some people particularly think like that, don't they? Or the holiday was the greatest ever, five stars, or it was a complete waste of time, no stars. Now, of course, many things in life aren't quite as simple as that, are they?

So the meal was fairly good. The meat was nice, but the vegetables were slightly overdone. So, I mean, how many stars would you give it there?

So this is a problem I find in giving reviews on TripAdvisor. And maybe I'm the only one who ever comes across that. But I'll tell you something about Christian faith.

[1:11] It is one thing or the other. It is a binary thing. You're in the kingdom or you're out of the kingdom. You're for Jesus or you're not for Jesus.

You're born again or you're not born again. And there aren't sort of two and a half stars or fairly Christian, slightly Christian, a bit more Christian. You're either a Christian or you're not.

And there is this binary choice. You are one of the Lord's people or you're not one of the Lord's people. You belong to the kingdom or you belong to the world. And when Jesus said you must be born again, he gave two choices, didn't he?

You either are born again or you're not born again. You must be born again. So you either are or are not. There's no such thing as somebody who's fairly a Christian. Now, once Jesus said to somebody, you are not far from the kingdom.

So he did say, you know, you can be further away or nearer. But he was talking about either being out of the kingdom further away or nearer or in the kingdom.

[2:15] He was still in this binary position. It was to do with entering the kingdom. And the text that I began with reminded us of that, didn't it?

It says to believe in Christian people, he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and has brought us into the kingdom of the son he loves.

So if you're a believer, you are in the kingdom. Definitely. That's it. So there is one kingdom of heaven, one kingdom of God and one king who is Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the king of this kingdom.

And as we go back into the Old Testament and read the stories, that underlying division is there. Although it's not always so clear to see.

Sometimes the sides are not clear. But other times it's very clear. There are characteristics and values of being in the kingdom of the right king.

[3:18] And that is clear. So Daniel very helpfully put it the other day. Are you on team David, the true king, or team Saul?

David being the true Christ and Saul, in our story, really turning into the Antichrist. So you've got this division here. And that will crop up in our story today.

But I think that will introduce us to the story. And where are we? If you've got one, Samuel 24, do open it up. We have God's king over God's people in the time before Jesus came.

And the king, let me just remind you of the vocabulary of this. The king is the anointed one. And in the original language, the anointed is Messiah, or something like Messiah.

It means anointed, from which we get Messiah. And the Greek equivalent, which is used in the New Testament, is the Christ. So those things are pretty much the same thing.

[4:18] The king, the anointed, the Messiah, the Christ. And that turns out to be quite important in this story. You'll see it's mentioned in verse 6, the Lord's anointed.

And then again in verse 6, he is the anointed of the Lord. And then in verse 10, he is the Lord's anointed. And that turns out to be very crucial.

So let's just get that bit of vocabulary. And in case you don't know the story, and haven't been following it along and just coming new to it, very briefly, we have got King Saul, who is in post. He is turning out to make more and more mistakes. He was chosen, but in some sense, the wrong sort of choices were made. He's turning out to be a failed king, but he is the anointed.

And there were promises that have been, as it were, withdrawn to him about his kingdom lasting. It's not going to last, and his son is not going to be king after him.

[5:21] His dynasty is going to fail. So we've got that king, and we've also got David, who was anointed sort of more secretly.

And he's destined to be king, but at the moment, he isn't king. And in fact, he is being rejected, and he's the sort of king in waiting. And we're going to see, as the story develops, how he does eventually come to the throne.

And as we are seeing, people side either with David or with Saul on one team or another. And that's a sort of cropping up of this deep division among the human race, those who are in the kingdom and those who are not in the kingdom.

And that division affects us too. So I can't see into people's hearts, but there are people here, no doubt, who are in the kingdom. And perhaps there are people here who are not yet in the kingdom. So let's tell the story. It's a story of the robe being cut off, or a corner of it. And I came up with three C's.

[6:28] 24 verses 1 to 6, the cut. 24, 7 to 15, the confession. This is the bit where David says what he's done. And then number 3, 24, 16 to 22, the conclusion.

Although I'm going to put a question mark over whether it is a conclusion. So that's the way we'll do it. We'll just go through the story under those three sort of paragraphs, the cut. The cut, the confession, and the conclusion.

I think that will work. So let's look at the cut. So in chapter 24, beginning, Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, and he was told that David is in the desert of En Gedi.

So Saul took 3,000 able young men from all Israel. That's a lot of people, isn't it? To set out to look for David and his men near the crags of the wild goats.

He came to the sheepfolds along the way. A cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself. It says literally to cover his feet. So he went in there to use the loo, if you see what I mean. So after his previous escape, David is again on the run, and we get to this bit of the terrain where there are a lot of caves, and Saul goes in, as it were, to go to the toilet.

[7:48] So there's Saul. And the last part of that verse, David and his men were hiding in the cave. I mean, wow. So David and his men are hiding right in the back of it, and in comes Saul to go to the loo.

There's David. And there's now a conversation. Now, the version that most of us have doesn't include the word behold, but there are quite a lot of beholds going along here, and they don't always get translated, but you get the idea of it saying, look, look, look, look, look, look, look, look.

You know, look, behold, this is the day, this is verse 4, the Lord spoke of when he said to you, I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.

So they're saying, this is this opportunity. So I don't know how we can imagine the sound levels going on here, but David's there, and the men are saying, look, Saul, now, this is your opportunity. This is your opportunity. And they refer to the Lord's word. So, I mean, that's always a helpful thing, or nearly always a helpful thing to do, isn't it, to say what God has said.

[9:06] And they say, this is the day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you

wish. I'm not sure whether that's an exact quote, but they're certainly on the right lines that God has promised that David will be king.

This is the day the Lord spoke of. So the Lord's word, the Lord's day, and the Lord's promise of triumph. Now, the Lord does make promises, and nothing, this is the thing about God's promises, nothing will stop him fulfilling his promises.

That's a great thing about God, isn't it? He's a promise-making God, and he has a promise-keeping God. And that's how Christians can live a life of faith, because we live by trusting him.

And I just invite you to enter the scene here. There's Saul, the one who is going to be rejected as king.

There's David, sword, sharp instrument, knife. There's the men, and they're egging him on, saying, go on, David, this is it.

[10:18] Now, you could just, like that, everything would be solved. Well, does David see it like that? He doesn't, does he?

He goes forward and cuts a bit of the robe, the corner. I think we'll come to that in a moment. But afterwards, verse 5, David was conscience-stricken.

What it says is, his heart smote him. You know, even when he just, he hadn't killed Saul, he just cut off a bit of his robe. Something went bang inside him.

That wasn't right. And the men are still urging him. I mean, he says in verse 6, the Lord forbid I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, or lay a hand on him, for he is the anointed of the Lord.

And with these words, David sharply rebuked his men. Have you got sharply rebuked or just rebuked? Some people have got sharply, and some people have got rebuked.

[11:19] Apparently, the word's quite strong. And he says, shut up, shut up, shut up. I'm not going to do that. It's sort of quite, he's quite strong with them. And he did not allow them to attack Saul.

You see, you get the pressure building up here. Go on, you can do it. I'll do it if you won't do it. You know, and David says, no, no, no, no, no. And just think of the pressures here.

Now, what is this? Is it an opportunity or a temptation? Is it a God-given gift or is it a test?

And David only has a few moments to make up his mind. Put this together. What a remarkable set of circumstances. We're hiding.

In comes Saul, all on his own. He's not going to have his sword out as he goes to the toilet. He's just going to be totally vulnerable. What should we do? And this is one of those things, isn't it?

[12:28] We pray, lead us not into temptation. Please don't put me into a situation where I suddenly have to make up my mind between something which might be terribly helpful or awful.

And I've got just a split second to make up my mind which it is. And that's what the situation that David's in. What should I infer from this?

Is God saying, here's the great opportunity? Remember Jonah, when he was running away from the Lord, he got to Joppa and there was just a ship for Tarshish.

It was just there. And he thought, well, this must be the Lord's will because there's a ship and I'm running away and I could go on. Do you see what I mean? Circumstances, yeah, what do you make of them?

What would you have done? There is a prayer in the New Testament that prays that we would discern what is best.

[13:37] In any given circumstance to discern what is best. And I think that's a great prayer. I mean, even if we go away remembering nothing else, that's a good prayer.

Lord, help me to discern what is best. I know some folk looking for jobs. What's the best way to go about that? I want to discern what is best. Some folks facing illness.

What should be my right attitude to that? Some folks under various pressures at home or at work. How should I respond?

And it does strike me that in this moment, I'm just also thinking of Joseph, wasn't it? Being seduced by his master's wife. And he just has a moment to respond and to make the right response.

It just seems to me that at that moment of testing, it's a bit late at that time just to work out what sort of people we are.

[14:42] We've been working that out in all the months and years before that. You know, what we've been putting into our lives, the way we've been cultivating our thinking, the habits that we've got into.

And all of a sudden, that's put to the test. Lead us not into temptation. Help me, Lord, when I have to make decisions, perhaps under pressure, to discern what is best.

Anyway, what does David do? Well, we know the answer. He cuts off a corner of the robe. David cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

And this formula, a corner of the robe, seems to be an important thing because it keeps on getting repeated. It's in verse 4. David cut off a corner of his robe.

And it's in verse 5. I'm sorry. Yeah, it's in verse 4. And it's in verse 5. He cut off a corner of his robe. And it's in verse 11. See, my father, I cut off a corner of your robe.

[15:46] And it's also another place in verse 11. Is it? A piece of your robe. See, I have a piece of your robe. That's actually a corner. So this corner of robe is a significant thing.

And the person who's telling us the story, the writer, wants us to get that. There's some interesting things about the corner. It's the same word as wing. So when Ruth, you remember the Lady Ruth, asks Boaz to marry her, she says, spread the corner of your robe over me.

And in the same book, if I remember correctly, it is said of Ruth, she came to take shelter under the wings of the Lord Almighty. And the wing and the corner are the same thing.

I don't know whether you think of it as the flappy bit at the edge or something like that. But this idea of the corner has got a lot of rich associations to it. And of course, the robe is a thing too.

I did ask that we should sing, in royal robes I don't deserve, I live to serve your majesty. Because this is a royal robe. And the things about robes actually are quite important.

[17:05] And David knows he's done something more than just sort of stick a hole in something that somebody got from Primark. This is way more significant.

When the prophet Samuel is talking to Saul about the fact he'll lose the kingdom, a bit of the robe tears off.

That's, I think, in 1527. So the robe and the kingdom are associated. And when Jonathan wants to transfer to David some of his royal privilege, he gives him his clothing, doesn't he?

He gives him the robe. So there's something significant about the robe. And David certainly thinks so. This is more than just a schoolboy prank. There's something significant. And his heart smites him.

Even at the point of just cutting off the corner. David's heart smote him. And why does his heart smite him? Why does he get sort of a bang on his chest, as it were?

[18:19] And he says in verse 6, The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord's anointed. And this is a significant thing, isn't it?

That David doesn't just see Saul as a random person. Nor does he deal with him as being a mortal enemy.

What he sees him as is the Lord's anointed, which, as I said at the beginning, is the Lord's king, the authorized king. The Lord's Messiah.

The Lord's Messiah. The Lord's Christ. And he says, you know, no matter how poorly he's done the job, this is who he is.

And God forbid that I should do anything to the detriment of the Lord's anointed, even if it's a symbolic injury.

[19:13] And of course, as I'm just saying, he persuaded the men not to go further. So I'll just stop and notice his deep respect. It's a very deep respect, isn't it?

For the Lord's anointed, for the Messiah, the Christ. And David there is picking up on something that I guess underlies the whole way God runs the world.

Behold, I have set on Zion my holy hill, my king. The nations conspire against him, but he will rule them with a rod of iron.

This is the king. The Lord's anointed. This is his role. This is his office. This is his manifesto, if you like. And his identity is Jesus.

Jesus, God forbid that I should lift my hand against the Lord's anointed. And I think this is a bit of a telltale sign as to which kingdom we're in.

[20:18] Would it be true of yourself that you would say, of all the mistakes I don't want to make, and of all the errors I don't want to fall into, the worst thing I think I could do is do something to the detriment of Jesus, the Lord's anointed.

God forbid that I should let him down. God forbid that I should give people reason to think lightly of him. God forbid that he should lose the place in my heart of being first.

Is that right? That's who he should be. We should be saying the same thing as David. That's where I want my heart to be. The Lord's anointed is the uppermost.

And the object of my love and reverence and respect and devotion. Amen. It's a mark of whose side you're on.

It's a mark of whose side you're on. And if your heart is not right in this, that's the prayer, isn't it? Lord, make Jesus so great in my estimation that I could be able to say that.

[21:31] Now, I also notice that in this passage, David is a wonderful example.

He's a model of reverent restraint. I'm not going to kill this guy. I could just do this now, but I'm not going to do it. Interesting to notice that next chapter, he's ready to fire up his Land Rover and get off on a raiding party and exterminate the guy who's omitted to invite him to the office party.

That's what happens in the next chapter. I'll be interested to see how Daniel opens that up to us.

But in the next chapter, he's not restrained at all. And then I think you've got the following chapter.

And so we can see David is a little bit of a, you know, where's he going to settle? What's going to be the final position that he adopts on this? And I suppose at least we can say, given that David one day was exemplary and another day, really, he needed rescuing from himself.

That's not a million miles from our experience, is it? We say to the Lord, you know, thank you for helping me to negotiate that particular difficult thing last week.

[22:55] But the fact that I negotiated it last week doesn't mean that I can just wander blithely into dangerous territory this week. Lord, help me today. That's right, isn't it? I need your help today.

I need to be obedient today. In fact, I managed it, yes, last week. Can't trade off that. It's today if you hear his voice. Harden not your hearts. So there's a little bit of a sort of a stimulus warning for us there.

So that was looking at the cut. So let's now move on to look at the confession. So this is from verse 7. Saul left the cave and went his way.

David went out of the cave and called out to Saul. There's a little thing going on with the word rise. He didn't allow the men to rise up against Saul.

Saul rose up and left the cave and David rose up out of the cave. So I expect it comes across to the original readers how it was written.

[23:58] The men did not arise. Saul did arise. And David arose. So Saul goes out of the cave. And David follows him out to make this confession, to do this speech.

And here he goes. David went out of the cave, verse 8, and called out to Saul, my lord the king. And Saul looked behind him.

I should think he was a little bit surprised, don't you think? And David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. And he said to Saul, why do you listen when men say, David is bent on harming you?

This day you have seen with your own eyes how the Lord gave me into your hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, I will not lay my hand on my lord because he is the Lord's anointed.

See, my father, look at this corner of your robe in my hand. I cut off the corner of your robe, but I did not kill you. See, there is nothing in my hand to indicate I am guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion.

[25:08] So his approach is really very humble, isn't it? My lord the king. There is a servant likeness in David here.

And he bows down in a very humble way. He prostrates himself to the ground. And he uses the word behold as well. I don't know, does it show? Does it say behold?

Old, maybe not. But it's another of these things. Look at this. Look at this situation. Look at this piece of cloth I've got in my hand and my knife, as it were, in the other hand. I could have killed you. Just look. Look at what you've got here in front of you. And he confesses what he's done. He did cut off the robe. But he declares his innocence. I didn't kill you.

I cornered you, in the sense. But I didn't kill you. And an interesting speech that he gives. There's quite a comprehensive, in verse 11, he uses all the possible words, or as far as I can see, all the possible words of doing wrong.

[26:10] I am not guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion. I have not wronged you. I haven't sinned against you. I haven't transgressed against you. I haven't tried to do evil to you.

And that's true, isn't it? He hasn't transgressed against Saul. He hasn't sinned against him. He hasn't tried to give him evil. There's a couple of words in there about evil. I haven't tried to do evil to you.

And he then moves on to calling upon the Lord as judge. Verse 12. May the Lord judge between you and me. May the Lord avenge the wrongs you have done to me.

But my hand will not touch you. Let's just click on here. I had the opportunity. People tried to persuade me. But I said, I'm not going to stretch out my hand against the Lord's anointed.

Behold, you know, look and see. Here's the evidence. And the Lord judge. The Lord avenge. And then he goes on to say, from evildoers come evil deeds.

[27:15] Which is an interesting statement about the continuity between what is in the heart and what comes out of the heart. Jesus said something similar, didn't it? From, I don't know, what did he say?

The things that defile come out from the heart. From the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks. However we try to pretend, at some point or another, what's going on inside will come out.

I think that's what David is talking about. And then he says that I am... Against whom has the king of Israel come out? Who are you pursuing? A dead dog.

A flea. I'm not really friends with fleas. We used to have fleas. I don't particularly like being bitten by fleas. This is before I was married, I have to say.

I'm not particularly friends with fleas. I don't find that a particularly comforting illustration. But the dead dog. I mean, he's saying, what harm is there in a dead dog?

[28:20] A dead dog is both not a threat and insignificant. And I think that's what he's saying about the flea. You know, a flea is an insignificant thing.

Although I have to say, it doesn't half itch if you get bitten by a flea. But I think he's saying, really, I am insignificant. I am not a threat. Why have you taken 3,000 men to come out and chase after me?

And then he again uses this time of vocabulary of judgment. May the Lord be our judge and decide between us.

May he consider my cause and uphold it. May he vindicate me by delivering me from your hand. And I did look it up.

And there's a whole lot of words about judgment. There's a word which just says judge. And then there's another word which just says judge. So he says the same thing twice. And he says, you are a judge and be a judge.

[29:23] And then there's a vocabulary about pleading a case. Upholding a cause. Uphold my cause. The Lord. Saul won't see things rightly.

But you see. You see the heart. You see the reality. You see. You weigh it all up. And will you deal with me as you see my cause is just.

And then we have in the. Have you got vindicate in your. Vindicate. And then deliver. Verse 15. Something like that. Vindicate and deliver. Vindicate and deliver.

Uphold. Uphold. Yeah. Uphold. They sound like words. What am I trying to say?

They're still judgment words. Be a judge who says not guilty. Be a judge who says he doesn't deserve to be treated like that. Let him go. They're all judgment words.

[30:26] And I think there's something quite important going on here. He's calling on the Lord as the fair, the righteous judge. judge. And of all.

I mean the Lord God is described in many ways. But it would be very wrong to omit the fact that the Lord God is in his nature judge.

Right from creation. Right from creation he judges. He says it is good. He looks at what he made, assesses it and judges.

And he does that with people and nations and systems. But we're people here. The Lord God is our judge.

And he will judge us. And that's worth investigating. The reason that he doesn't, that David doesn't take personal vengeance is because the Lord is the one who avenges.

[31:34] No need to take personal vengeance. This is a New Testament teaching. The Lord, do not avenge yourselves. Vengeance is mine, says the Lord.

This spares us Christian people of feeling that we've got to get even with folk ourselves if we've been mistreated. And that spares us from having to get even with people.

We can leave that with the Lord. And we can be peacemaking people. We can cope with insults and poor treatment. Because in the end, for sure, the Lord will avenge.

Vengeance is mine. But it's also, while we're on this subject, something that we should take note of. As human beings, so let's just think of our humanness.

Standing before the Lord Almighty, the Holy God, who is judge, we need to fear. As humans.

[32:39] Now the thing about God's judgment is he is exactly fair. There's a lot of idea of rewarding, recompensing. Giving exactly what such and such deserves.

Exactly what such and such a deed deserves. And on the day of judgment, the Lord will give what people deserve. Now there's more to be said, but I'm just thinking in terms of the human race.

And I don't know whether you care to ponder that. Just thinking of your life and your deeds. And what's going on inside.

Are you happy for the Lord to judge you? I think that if we knew ourselves well enough, we would be terrified that the Lord would look into our hearts.

See what we've thought. Look into our track record. See what we've done. Just as human beings. I'm going to say some more about this in a moment. But if we had our lives unshielded.

[33:52] Just standing, as it were, naked before the Lord. As our judge. I think we would rightly be terrified.

And I suppose the degree to which we would be terrified is the degree to which we're so grateful to the Lord Jesus.

That we don't have to face that judgment if we're Christians. So let me just take that. Without Christ. If you were without Christ.

You would stand naked. undefended. Before the holiness of God's judgment. We wouldn't stand. Yeah. We wouldn't stand. I don't think we're going to really understand the Christian message unless we first understood this. Because we won't understand why it's such a big deal that Jesus died on the cross.

[34:55] And we won't understand what a big deal it is that God loves sinners. We won't understand what a big deal it is when Jesus comes again.

Unless we've got this bit first. If there were no Jesus. If there were no Christ. And we stood before God as judge. The fair judge.

The absolutely impeccable judge. We'd be terrified. Let me take it on. With the intervention of the Christ.

Of Jesus Christ. Now Christians are so in union with Christ. That you can't think of Christians minus Christ.

You can't separate them. We're inseparable from him. So in judgment we have to take Jesus into account as well. And this is the wonderful thing about his death on the cross.

[35:59] That when he died on the cross. He suffered God's adverse judgment. As it would have fallen on us. But it fell on him.

He paid the penalty. He bore the wrath. The absolutely fair wrath of God. Upon us sinners.

And I suppose one way of computing. What bad sinners we have been. Is to see what or how much Jesus had to go through.

To pay the price for our sins. When Christians stand before God in judgment. The thing is. That price has already been paid. Yeah. The wrath has already been dealt with. There is no wrath left.

[37:00] There is no adverse judgment left. Because Jesus has paid it all. Please look at 1 John 1 verse 9. Unless this is not just for the time to come.

This is for how it is now. And I hope your translation says the same as mine. Yeah. Chapter 1. Verse 9. If we confess our sins. He is something to forgive us our sins. What's the something? Well there's two somethings actually. Faithful. And just. I'd like us to clock the power of that word just.

When we confess our sins. As those who are in Christ. It is a function of God's justice that he forgive us.

[38:24] Because the price has already been paid. And it would be unjust if God did not forgive us. Do you see what I'm saying? There is a certain strength to our plea.

Uphold my cause. That Christians have. Because Christ has died for us. I know I'm a sinner. But that's not.

I know I continue to sin. I confess that. But the strength of my cause is this. That Christ has already paid the price. Therefore when I turn to the Lord for justice.

I say. The only just thing you can do. Is to forgive my sins. I think that's amazing. He is just and faithful. To forgive us our sins. And cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I think we need that encouragement. Because sometimes we think. God will only forgive my sins. If I've made a reasonable attempt. Or God will only forgive my sins. If I've tried hard enough. Or he probably won't forgive my sins.

[39:22] Blah blah blah. But this is not the issue. Is it. What is justice? Christ has paid. He is just. To forgive us our sins. We are appealing. As David did.

To God's justice. As the fair judge. Does that point make sense? Because I think it's a really strong point. We sang. And it's right.

His mercy is more. But our forgiveness is not simply. A function of God's mercy. The forgiveness that Christians have. Is a function of his justice. Yeah.

He is just. And faithful to give us our sins. And. This ought to knock on the head. Any lingering suspicion. That people might have.

That God is trying to get even with me. God never deals with his people. To get even with them. He got even with them on the cross. He might deal with us in loving discipline.

[40:17] But that's a different thing altogether. Loving discipline. Yes. But getting even with us. Punishing us. Absolutely not. All our sins.

Were laid on Christ. And justice says. Forgive those people. And treat them with the love. That you have for the Lord Jesus. Please don't think. If you're going through a hard time.

God is punishing you. That was all done. On the cross. Amen. I think there's a great assurance there. Let's come then to the conclusion.

So the conclusion. Conclusion is the ending. Isn't it? The tying up of all the loose ends. Verse 16. David finished saying this. Saul said. Is that your voice David?

My son. It's nice that he. Having called him the son of Jesse. He now calls him David. And he calls him my son. There seems to be an affection there. Doesn't he? And he weeps aloud. He seems to have a change of heart.

[41:13] You're more righteous than I. He says. Now then. You have treated me. There's some words here. Good. It says well doesn't it. I have treated you badly.

You have just now told me about the good you did to me. And the Lord gave me into your hands. But did not. But you did not kill me. When a man finds his enemy.

Does he let him get away? Good. May the Lord reward you. Good. Good. For the way you treated me today. I know that you will surely be king.

And the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands. Now whether I've remembered that exactly accurately. I don't know. But there is an emphasis and a repetition of the idea. I treated you

badly.

You've done me good. You've treated me good. You've repaid me good. You're more righteous than I. You've done me good.

[42:09] And I think this is worth picking up on isn't it. Something characteristic about David's kingship. You know when he's in his right mind. When he's following his instructions if you like.

When he's got the heart of things. He does Saul good. Do you remember he did. We did that with the. When he was playing his harp. And it was good for Saul.

And he is good again. David is the one who does good. Even to his enemies. Now I know that's not the whole story. Because if you're a Philistine. That would be a bit different.

Or an Amalekite. But here he does good to his enemies. I don't think that's just David. I think that's something to do with the God he serves. Because our God sends his rain on the just and the unjust. Doesn't he? He sends his sun to shine on the just and the unjust. He does good to everybody. This is what theologically is called his common grace.

[43:11] Whether people are good or bad. He still gives them rain. He still gives them sunshine. He still does them good. And there is something in the kingdom. Seems to me.

That echoes and re-echoes this. We get it in the New Testament. Jesus who gave himself to redeem us. He goes on to say. A people who are zealous of good works.

Christians ought to have the same instinct within them. I once heard a guy from Northern Ireland. Reflecting on the troubles. And he said.

Because I'm a Christian. I cannot forgive those people. And I thought. That doesn't make sense to me. I would have thought. If you're a Christian. You would have an instinct.

To forgive. I mean. I'm just quoting that somewhat at random. But. Isn't that right? If you're a Christian. You've got an instinct. From the king. To do people good.

[44:10] Because we've received good. A people who are zealous of good works. And. The Lord God loves to do good.

And we're recipients of good. God. Demonstrates his love for us. That while we were still sinners. Christ died for us.

When we were on the wrong side. When we were against him. He didn't wait for us to change our minds. He paid this huge price. He did us good.

This is. The. Deep mystery. Of the love of God. I mean. Don't trivialize the love of God. There's a deep. Powerful mystery here. God. Demonstrates his love for us in this.

While we were still sinners. Christ died for us. While we were enemies. We were reconciled to God. By the death of his son. There's something. Deep.

[45:07] Deep. In the being of God. That does good. To people who don't deserve it. I know there's. There's more to be said about that. But we've received good from the king.

Haven't we? Is that right? He's done us good. I don't know what your. The story of your Christian faith. Is. But certainly for me. I wasn't looking for God.

But he came looking for me. And. I didn't deserve. Good from him. But he came and did good to me. That's. You could use another word for it.

Wonderful grace. That gives what I don't deserve. Pays me what Christ has earned. And lets me go free. I mean. It's amazing. Isn't it? And of course.

He works all things together. For. For good. Well. I started off saying this is about. Sides.

[46:01] And. I think it's a reasonable. Thing to ponder. Which of these two sides. Would you be on? What is your attitude. To the Lord's anointed. For example. You're indifferent.

And really. If you're honest. You didn't really care that much. What people think of Jesus. Whether. You. You would have cut the robe. I think. Wouldn't you? Hostility. I mean. David's men were saying. Go on.

Kill him. So. Would you have been one of David's men. Or would you have been. Like David. And said. God forbid. That I should do anything. To the detriment. Of the Christ.

The Christ Jesus. In my word. Or action. Or by inaction. And I've received good. And surely. That puts it in my heart. To want to do good.

I said it was the conclusion. Conclusion is the end. And here we get to chapter 24.

[46:58] Saul has accepted that he's wrong. David has performed this noble task. Of just letting Saul go. So in chapter 25. This will be the end of the story.

Saul meekly dazed down his weapons. At the feet of David. Goes off into retirement. Escorts him into the palace. David goes on to be. A model of restraint. And dignity.

And nobility. Of everything one could hope for. In the Messiah. Except it doesn't say that. The last sentence.

Is a bit of a let down. Isn't it? So Saul went home. Nothing much changed. And David. Went back to his fortification. Nothing much changed there either.

So we're going to need chapter 25. Which. At least chapter 25. Which we look forward to next week. Thank you. Thank you.