

2 Samuel 9

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[0 : 00] Good evening, everyone. So we are in the book of 2 Samuel tonight, 2 Samuel chapter 9. So let me invite you to turn there with me. It's page 260 in the Pew Bible, if you want to follow along there.

2 Samuel chapter 9. 2 Samuel chapter 9.

Or in old school black and white. We're looking at 2 Samuel chapter 9. Let me read this for us. And David said, Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?

Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba. And they called him to David. And the king said to him, Are you Ziba? And he said, I am your servant. And the king said, Is there not still someone to the house of Saul that I may show the kindness of God to him?

Ziba said to the king, There is still a son of Jonathan. He is crippled in his feet. The king said to him, Where is he? And Ziba said to the king, He is in the house of Machir, the son of Amiel, at Lodabar.

[1 : 36] Then king David sent and brought him from the house of Machir, the son of Amiel, at Lodabar. And Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and paid homage.

And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold, I am your servant. And David said to him, Do not fear, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan.

And I will restore to you all the land of Saul, your father, and you shall eat at my table always. And he paid homage and said, What is your servant that you should show regard for a dead dog such as I?

Then the king called Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, All that belong to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson.

And you and your sons and your servants shall till the land for him and shall bring in the produce that your master's grandson may have bread to eat. But Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, shall always eat at my table.

[2 : 37] Now Ziba had 15 sons and 20 servants. Then Ziba said to the king, According to all that my lord the king commands his servants, so will your servant do. So Mephibosheth ate at David's table like one of the king's sons.

And Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Micah. And all who lived in Ziba's house became Mephibosheth's servants. So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he ate always at the king's table.

Now he was lame in both his feet. Let's pray together. God, we're thankful that you've given us your word. Lord, we thank you that your word became flesh in Jesus Christ.

And that through the apostles and the prophets they have proclaimed him. And all that you want us to know about you. And God, that you've given us that word in scripture now. That we might hear it and understand it and know it.

So Lord, we pray by your spirit that you would help this text to become one that you use in our hearts. That we might become more true and faithful worshipers of you, we pray.

[3 : 39] In Jesus' name. Amen. Well, I wonder if anyone has ever shown you an act of surprising kindness. Beth and I just moved into a new place this summer.

And we've been very grateful for some of the surprising kindnesses that our neighbors have showed us. Our new neighbors. One of my neighbors actually spent a whole Saturday morning on some hot July day.

Helping me haul brush and branches from these couple of trees that we had cut down in front of our house. With a friend's truck. So he pretty much just like out of a sheer act of kindness. Spent all of

his day just hauling these things back and forth to the dump with me. Which is something he totally didn't do. I mean, he barely knew me. So that was really surprising. And it was a real blessing to Beth and I. Another one of our neighbors. This neighbor actually is a member here at Trinity. Was willing at the drop of a hat to stay with our kids through the middle of the night. While Beth and I rushed off to the hospital about a month ago. So our third son Owen. [4 : 38] Our third child Owen could be born. These for us were sort of surprising acts of kindness. And we've been really grateful for them. And it's been great for us in our new neighborhood. But I wonder if anyone has shown you.

Not just a sort of kind of surprising kindness. I wonder if anyone has actually shown you. A life changing act of kindness. The sort of act that leaves you fundamentally a different person. An act of kindness so radical. So unexpected. So undeserved. That it actually changes you. In our text tonight. David shows a radical kindness to this man named Mephibosheth. Say that three times fast. Mephibosheth. Now remember these books of 1 and 2 Samuel. Are historically speaking. All about the establishment of the monarchy in ancient Israel. Right? And at the center of that story. Is David the king. And it's through David that God establishes. His sort of his kingdom among his people at this point in their history. [5 : 46] So in these books. We've got a front row seat really. To perhaps. What is one of the most important themes in the whole Bible. The kingdom of God. The rule and reign of God. And we've been asking.

What's the nature of God's kingdom? And more importantly. What's the nature of the king of that kingdom? Who will rule God's people? What will he be like? These are some of the things we've been seeing throughout our series.

And here. In chapter 9. As we come to it. We see David. God's king. Doing something. That was actually very unique. Well what's so unique about what David does here?

Well on the one hand. You have to understand the historical context. At this point. In the story of 1 and 2 Samuel. David is at the height. Of his power. The whole nation at this point. Has crowned him king. He's established his throne. In Jerusalem. In this sort of mountain city. This stronghold of Zion. He's defeated all of Israel's surrounding enemies.

[6 : 51] By this point in the story. He's created this sort of buffer zone. Around them. So the people are enjoying peace. Like they've never enjoyed before. And on top of all that. If you look back at 2 Samuel chapter 7.

God made a promise to David. That his royal house. Is actually going to last forever. David. Is at the utter height.

Of his power. And here's what typical kings. In the ancient near east. Would do. When they sat at the height. Of their power. They would eliminate.

Nearly everything. That had to do. With the previous rival king's reign. In other words. They would totally clean house.

I have an older brother. Who is in college athletics. He's a division one. Women's volleyball coach. Those things exist. They do. But he's in the SEC.

[7 : 50] Which is like a big deal. Right. But we're in the northeast. We have no idea what the SEC is. So there you go. Anyway. This is what I've learned from my brother. Who's in college athletics. When you're at that level. Of the sport.

Do you know what happens. When a new coach is hired. Into a program. They clean house. Now. Thankfully. My brother. Has never. Has not been the one yet.

Who's had to clean house. Who knows. Maybe one day he will. But this new coach comes in. And sets up a totally new administration. All the old assistant coaches. Gone. A lot of the trainers. Get replaced. And you better believe. That the style of play. The philosophy of the team. Gets totally revamped. In other words. These new coaches. These new head coaches. They clean house. And if that's true.

Of division one. Athletic coaches. Multiply it by about 10,000. When it came to kings. In the ancient world. When you got into your throne. You got rid.

[8 : 43] Of everyone. And everything. That belongs. To the previous rival king. You got rid of his advisors. His generals. His monuments. His policies. But above all. You especially got rid.

Of his sons. And his grandsons. Maybe you would keep around. An advisor. Maybe you would keep around. A general or two. If they actually sort of showed. Some kind of stunning loyalty. But any potential male heir. You definitely. Got rid of. Because. You didn't want any threat. To your power. Or to your rule. New kings.

At the height of their power. Cleaned house. That was the gruesome reality. Of politics. In the ancient world. In the ancient world. So now perhaps. We can see why.

What David does in chapter 9. Is so radical. Who was. Mephibosheth. Well this story is very clear. He's the grandson. Of Saul. The previous king of Israel.

[9 : 43] Perhaps Mephibosheth. Is one of the lone. Remaining survivors. With a legitimate claim. To being Saul's heir. And he's not just. Any old grandson. Of Saul. Who is he the son of?

He's the son of none other than. Jonathan. Saul's sort of great son. The war hero. Who was tragically cut down.

In battle with the Philistines. Mephibosheth is the last. Son. Of a rival. Rebel. House. And on top of it all.

The narrator tells us. This interesting detail. He points it out. A few times. In this chapter. He tells us that Mephibosheth. Is permanently. Disabled. If you go back to 2nd Samuel. Chapter 4.

Verse 4. This is what you'll read. Jonathan. The son of Saul. Had a son. Who was crippled. In his feet. Then he explains. He was five years old. When the news about Saul. And Jonathan. Came from Jezreel.

[10 : 38] That's when Saul. And Jonathan. Died. In battle. To the Philistines. And his nurse. Mephibosheth's nurse. Took him up. And fled. And as she fled. In her haste. He fell. And became lame.

And his name. Was Mephibosheth. It's a very tragic story. Isn't it? Fleeing. Out of fear.

That they're next. That the Philistine war machine. Is coming. And coming for them. As part of the royal house. Fearing. That with Saul's death. Civil war.

And social upheaval. Was ready to break out. At any minute. Again. Targeting them. Part of the royal house. They run away. And in the flight. This five year old boy.

Falls. And both of his feet. Are damaged. In such a way. The narrator doesn't say. Exactly how. But in such a way. That he's lame. For the rest of his life. So here.

[11 : 32] Is Mephibosheth. The crippled son. Of a now. Rival. Rebel. House. Now. If we were typical. Ancient. Near Easterners. If we lived back. In that day.

And if we lived. In a kingdom. Like any of the other kingdoms. Of that time. We would say. That Mephibosheth. Was useless. At best. After all. What good is a man.

In a warrior culture. Who's crippled. In both of his feet. We would say. That he was useless. At best. And a dead man. At worst. But friends.

I hope you see here. In this text. That God's kingdom. Is not at all. Like the kingdoms. Of this world. That David.

In this instance. At least. Is not like the kings. Of this world. He doesn't eliminate. Mephibosheth. He doesn't leave him. To rot.

[12 : 30] Out in the hinterland. Of the kingdom. Which is where. Low to bar. Is by the way. That's basically. The boondocks. It's kind of funny. Actually. In Hebrew.

The word low. Means no. Or not. And the word. Debar. Is sort of a general word. That can mean word. Or thing. Or matter. Or just. This. So.

The name. Low to bar. Middle. Literally. Literally. Means no thing. This is literally. Nowheresville. Where Mephibosheth. Is hiding. For those of us. Who live in New Haven. It's like.

Northeastern Connecticut. What actually. Happens up there. Do people live there. I don't know. We never go there. It's the boondocks. But what does David do.

With Mephibosheth. What does he do. With this. Disabled son. Of a rebel house. Who to the eyes of the world. Is a useless man. Living in a useless place. Where does David bring him.

[13 : 27] Not just to the capital. To Jerusalem. Not just to the palace. To the king's house. But David gives him a seat. At his very own table. Which if you look again.

At the end of verse 11. You'll see exactly. What that means. It means that David. Is now treating Mephibosheth. Like one of his own sons. You know. I wonder what some of David's advisors.

Were thinking. When he did this. David. Are you sure? I mean. Come on. What good is this going to do you? I mean. Mephibosheth. Really? You want to put a descendant.

Of Saul's house. The king who chased you. In the wilderness for years. And tried to kill you. You want to put him. At your table. You want to treat him. Like one of your own sons. And let him feast. Like royalty. What are you thinking.

David? Why? And what about some of the. Surrounding kingdoms. Outside of Jerusalem. I wonder what they would have thought. When they got the news. When the article popped up.

[14:22] On their Facebook feed. Or whatever they used back then. Probably my space. David welcomed Saul's last living heir. To his own table.

I wonder if they even had a category. To conceive of an act like that. Right? Kings were supposed to clean house. Not pull up an extra seat to the table. And say come sit down. I wonder if David suddenly seemed weak to them.

Or confused. Or crazy. Or did they think that David. Maybe had some ulterior motive. Maybe the only way they could make sense. Of such an act.

Was through the lens of cynicism. Oh David must be getting something out of this. He must have something in mind for himself. Whatever they heard.

Whatever they thought. This radical kindness. Must have seemed strange. Foolish. Maybe even dangerous. And you know friends.

[15:17] That's exactly how many will see it today. Because don't you see. This kind of radical kindness. Ought to be what characterizes us today.

If we profess to be a part of God's kingdom. To be a part of God's rule and reign in the world. To be under that kind of lordship. Then we too.

Should be a people of radical kindness. We should no longer look at people through those old lenses. And through those old questions. That we always ask when we're sizing each other up. When we're wondering about what we ought to do for each other. Questions like. I wonder what this person can do for me. Or I wonder how this person is useful to me. Or to my agenda.

What do I owe this person? And what do they owe me? And what have they done to deserve my kindness? And what have they done to not deserve it? And how convenient is this going to be?

[16:14] Because I mean I've got a lot of things going on. And instead of all that. We ought to be thinking. Who. Can I show kindness to?

It doesn't matter if they deserve it. It doesn't matter if it's helpful to me or my agenda. It doesn't matter if it's convenient or not. It doesn't matter if it makes me look. Weak or confused or crazy. To my neighbors and my friends.

Who. Someone bring me someone. That I can show kindness to. Because God's kingdom is a kingdom of undeserved kindness. It's a kind word.

To a co-worker. Even when they've done nothing. But be irritating all week. It's a kind act to a neighbor. Even though they basically ignore you most of the time.

It's even a kind response to an enemy. Or to someone who's wronged you. Even though they've never asked for forgiveness. When the world would expect us to ignore.

[17:16] Or to get even. Or even to clean house. The people in God's kingdom do the opposite. And they show kindness. But you know there's a problem.

Isn't there? I mean we read a story like 2 Samuel 9. Right? And we think yes. This is exactly what the world needs more of. Right? We need radical kindness.

We need a new kingdom in the midst of the old. Yes. We love this kind of thing. And yet. And yet when I look at my own heart. And I look at my own life.

Is that what I see? Flowing naturally out of me? Do I see myself extending kindness freely? Friends I confess that more often.

I find myself thinking. How are they going to earn it? And what have they done for me? And more often I'm looking for something.

[18:19] That's going to be to my benefit. Am I the only one? And if it's inconvenient. I'll make excuses. And if they've done something to offend me.

Well kindness isn't what comes out. Is it? They're lucky if I acknowledge. They exist. Let alone show them kindness. So friends.

We're in this dilemma. Aren't we? On the one hand. In the face of a passage like this. We see. And we want. To be people of this kind of radical. Kingdom of God. Sort of kindness.

And we see how beautiful it is. And we imagine. What it would be like. If this weren't just a story.

Long ago. But if it were something. That characterized our friendships. And our marriages. And our

neighborhoods.

And our churches. What if they were all. Shot through. With this kind of. Unexpected. Undeserved. Kindness being given. And received. We love it.

[19:17] And we're drawn to it. And we know. That that's what we should be doing. And yet. On the other hand. We see how. Far. We fall short.

In actually. Doing it. We're like the kid in gym class. Who on the first day of the new unit. Watches the video.

Of how to shoot a basketball. And on the video. It seems so easy. You just let it go. And it goes in. Boom. And the kid thinks. Yeah. I got this. Then once he gets on the court.

And gets the ball in his hands. He's lucky to hit the backboard. Let alone make a shot. But you know. Unlike that. Unlike that kid in gym class.

You know what. You and I need more. When it comes to this area. Of kindness. And extending undeserved kindness. What we need. Is more than just a few more days. On the court. And a little more practice.

[20:13] Because our problem runs deeper. Than muscle memory. In good form. Doesn't it? Every moralist. Who's ever published a book.

Will tell you. That we ought to show. Undeserved kindness. To one another. In some way. Shape or form. And yet. It's still so hard. Because our problem.

Runs down. To the depths. Of our very hearts. You see. Down into that. Seemingly. Inescapable. Selfishness. And self-regard.

That's lodged. In each and every one of us. That we try to cover up. And hide. Becomes shooting out. In all sorts of ways. That inborn.

Pattern. Of loving. And worshiping. Ourselves. More than anything. And anyone else. That deep. Seated. Thing. Within us. That the Bible calls.

[21:10] Sin. In other words. What could change.

Our hearts. In other words. Did you notice why. David showed kindness. To Mephibosheth.

After all. He says in verse one. For Jonathan's sake. Jonathan was David's most faithful friend.

Go back sometime. And read for Samuel 18. And 19. And 20. And you'll get the story. Of David and Jonathan. Now you'll remember from that story. That Jonathan was Saul's son.

Right? The heir to Saul's throne. But. Jonathan knew. That God had promised David. The kingdom. And as a result.

[22:05] Jonathan was loyal. To David. His entire. Life. Even. At a critical moment. Functionally saving David's life.

From the wrath of Saul. And now. Here in our chapter. In response. To the radical kindness. That Jonathan showed David. And as an expression.

Of a. Of their covenant. Of friendship. That they shared. David. Here. Overthrows. All the social. And political.

Expectations. Of his day. And brings. Jonathan's son. To his table. And treats him. Like his very own. In other words. David.

David. Could show kindness. Because he had received it. You see. And now. You might be saying. To yourself. Look. That's all fine. And dandy.

[22:58] But I've never had a friend. Like Jonathan. What hope is there for me? Well friend. There's a greater hope. Than you realize.

Because hundreds of years. After this story. In 2nd Samuel. Chapter 9. A descendant of David. Would be born in Israel. But he wouldn't be born.

In the center of power. He would actually be born. Way out. On the margins. Out in a nowhereville. Called Galilee. And this descendant of David. This rightful king.

To the throne. Wouldn't spend his time. Courting rulers. And feasting with dignitaries. Instead he. Surrounded himself. With the poor. And the weak.

And the lame. And he would lay his hands on them. And in some instances. He would just speak a word. And their blinded eyes would open. And their disabled limbs.

[23:54] Would regain their strength. And at the end of his life. This rightful king. Rode into Jerusalem. Into the city of David.

Into the city of kings. And instead of being crowned. The rightful king that he was. He was crucified. Like a common criminal.

And they pinned each of his limbs. To that cross. And hung him up. And strung him up to die. Like a useless. Worthless.

Piece of garbage. In the church. But it was not. You see. For anything. That this king had done. He was innocent.

And perfectly so. The only. Human being. Who ever. Lived. Uninfected. By that deep. Seated. Selfishness.

[24 : 51] That rules us all. No. No. This. Sinless. King. His death. Wasn't because of his sin. It was in the place.

Of sinners. It was for. Others. Because you and I. You see. Who are we. In this story.

Of second Samuel. Chapter nine. Friends. You see. You and I. Are the Mephibosheths. In the story. We are the children.

Of the rebel house. We're the part. Of the rebel humanity. Who've tried to. Throw off. God's good. Rule. In the world. That God has made. And we're the ones.

Who are. Unable. Not just physically. We're the ones. Who are unable. More tragically. Spiritually. To do any possible good. Unable.

[25 : 47] To get ourselves. Out of the mess. That we're in. But Jesus Christ. The true. And better. David. Has lavished. His kindness.

Upon us. Kindness. Upon kindness. By dying. In our place. For our sins. And rising again. On the third day. For our justification. For our righteousness.

You see. So that you and I. Rebels though we are. Helpless though we are. So that you and I. Can be welcomed. To the table. And not just some table.

Of some king. Who's going to live. And who's going to die. But to be welcomed. To the very table.

Of God. So that through faith. In Jesus Christ. We might be adopted. As sons.

And daughters of God. And know God's. Unending. Eternal. Heart. Thrilling. Kindness. For eternity. And friends. Only when you.

[26 : 41] See. What. Jesus. This true David. Has done for you. Only. When spiritually speaking. You see that. You and I. We are all. Mephibosheth. And only when you see that.

His kindness. Is extended to you. Only then. Will your selfish heart. Begin to change. Only then. By putting your trust.

In him. Will sin's power. Over you. Be broken. And only when you. Come into relationship. With him. Will you be able. To show.

The sort of kindness. That David. Showed here. Only then. When you receive. This undeserved kindness. Of the true king. Will your life.

Start to take the shape. That it ought to take. In God's kingdom. Only when you. Come into relationship. With the king. Will you live out. The kingdom. Now in a minute.

[27 : 36] We're going to go. To the communion table. Together. We're going to. Share in the bread. And we're going to. Share in the cup. And tonight. If you've put your trust. In Jesus Christ. This one.

That we've been talking about. This true and better David. If you've put your trust. In him. As your Lord. And as your savior. Then this table. Is the place. The Lord's supper.

Is the place. And the time. When you get to remember. With all of your senses. The kindness. That Jesus Christ. Has shown. To you. And the way. In which he's brought you. Into God's family.

By his grace. And not by your works. And this table. Is a place. Where your faith. Can be strengthened. And as your faith. Is strengthened. And as you remember. And worship.

Through these elements. Jesus. And what he's done for you. In worshiping him. The Holy Spirit. Will work in you. And make you a person. More and more. Of the kind of radical. Undeserved kindness.

[28 : 31] That we've been thinking about. This more. Tonight. Make you that kind of person. Of kindness. In the world. If you're here tonight. And you're not a Christian. If you're not sort of. Sure where you stand.

With spiritual things. Then as we pass around. The bread and the cup. As they come around. Don't take them. Just pass the plate by. Instead. Take hold.

Through faith. Of the one. That these. Symbols represent. In other words. Tonight. Turn. Turn. Turn. Turn. To the one.

Who is living. And reigning. And risen. Jesus Christ. Turn to him. In prayer. Admit. That you're weak. And sinful. Place your trust. In what he did for you.
On the cross. For your sin. And take him. As your Lord. Give your life to him. That's what it means. To become a Christian. To turn. And trust. In Jesus. As your savior.

[29 : 26] And as your Lord. And friends. As you do so. You can know. That there's a place. At his table. For all who turn. And trust in him.

That none are excluded. On the basis of family. Or ability. Or your past. Or what you have done. Or what you haven't done. That Jesus Christ. And his kindness.

Is ready. To receive. You. And all of us. Now let's pray. And let's prepare. To go to the table together. Lord Jesus.

We're thankful. For this chapter. In the book. Of 2 Samuel. That gives us. Such a clear picture. Jesus. Of your mercy. And your grace. Lord. It's not a flattering picture. We confess.

When we think about ourselves. In the shoes. Of Mephibosheth. Lord. We don't often like to think. That we're. Spiritually. Incapable. Before you.

[30 : 25] God. We want to hold. On to some thread. Of our own righteousness. And our own justification. God. I pray that you would give us. Hearts. Like Mephibosheth.

In this passage. Who could admit. That he had. No rights. That he had nothing. To commend him. To the favor of the king. Lord.

Help us to have that kind of. Humility. Tonight. Before you. And Lord Jesus. I pray that you would. Indeed. Indeed. By your Holy Spirit. Assure us. Of your kindness.

Through the cross. And resurrection. For all who believe. So Jesus. As we go to your table now. Would you feed our faith. And strengthen us. We pray. Amen. We're going to sing.

A hymn together. And then we're going to. Celebrate the Lord's Supper. So let's sing this hymn. As a way of preparing. To share in the Lord's Supper. Together. The Lord.

[31 : 37] The Lamb who bears.■■■. Thank you.