

We are in part 3 of our study on David in connection with our verse by verse study through the book of Hebrews. We are studying David to understand why the Holy Spirit included him in the famed Hall of Faith found in **Hebrews 11:32**.

Hebrews 11:32

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of **David** and Samuel and the prophets.

So far we have focused on what happened to David from the time he was a boy up until the time he became king. I mentioned that this week we were going to study about “King” David; but before we jump into the next part of his life I thought we should stop and spend some time talking about David’s experience during this first part of his life.

You see it is one thing to talk about what happened, the facts, the data, the stories, and an entirely different thing to talk about a person’s experience. Experience crosses over into the realm of emotions and feelings. How do you think David felt during all the time that he was considered to be an enemy of the State having to flee his home, his friends, his family, when he did absolutely nothing wrong. After all, David was an innocent man who never would raise his hand against the Lord’s anointed. The only thing David did was exist as one whom the Lord had chosen. That is it. Everything else was pretty much done to him.

Let’s think about it for a moment. Imagine you are out in 110 degree heat looking for a cave to hide in and everyone is complaining and looking to you to

make all the decisions all the time—and to make the right decisions all of the time. Imagine that there is no relief from the heat, no relief from the running, no relief from the exhaustion, no relief from the smell, no relief from the feeling that at any moment you might be found and you and your people killed, no relief from the constant attention you have to give to every little detail knowing that Saul has spies everywhere, and no relief from the desire to just quit, give it up, tell everyone to go home and sneak off and take a vacation.

I am sure that with all eyes on you, the pressure to act like you have it all together, like you are ok, and like you know what you are doing would be tremendous. You probably would not want others to see any weakness in you: to see you get depressed, cry, or see your stumble around in fear. And you would not want them to think that they are following a fool.

What would you do? How would you process what had happened to you and what was happening to you? How would you deal with the feelings of constant rejection, hate, loneliness, isolation, abandonment, disillusionment, fear and terror? After all, people are watching you.

Would you pack them in? Would you ignore them? Would you shut them off before those feelings overtook you? Would you find a distraction so you would not have to face them? Would you find a way to numb your feelings? Would you seek out other pain or destructive things to avoid dealing with the reality that those who should have loved you hurt you the worse? Would you just move forward, or would you let yourself be fully immersed in the experience?

We can learn a lot from David in regard to how he handled the internal emotional pain in his life as I am pretty sure that David did it differently than most

every one of us in this room. David learned how to fully experience his emotions, then how to take them to God, and most importantly leave them with God.

I have found that one major problem with many who God sends to us here at Pathway is that they have no idea how to deal with or process the hurt and pain associated with what has happened to them in the past or what is happening to them in their now. They have never been taught how to experience and handle those types of scary emotions in a healthy way; so they just default to putting a lid on those emotions believing that nothing productive really comes from expressing them.

Then they do everything and anything, to keep the emotion from coming up so they don't have to experience the pain, the sadness, loneliness, depression, disillusionment, and the anger that is constantly trying to pour out from within. Some people have had to literally turn off their connection with their past and create some incredible delusion to live in. Others live in constant denial about their hurt and despite their obvious dysfunction they think their issues have nothing to do with the past.

For most of us, how we handle our emotions has been a learned behavior. We have watched how our dad or mom handled emotions between themselves and how they treated others (including brothers and sisters), and we learned what was allowed, not allowed, punished and rewarded in our family. And we adjusted accordingly believing that what we were taught (directly or indirectly) is the right and acceptable way to deal with emotions.

As a result, many of you are deathly afraid of actually letting yourselves be sad, depressed, lonely, angry, or disillusioned; and you do anything and everything to

avoid experiencing or feeling such emotions. For example, some of you (at least in the past) have tried to numb yourselves with substances, with partying, with music. Others have resorted to self-inflicted pain so you don't have to face the real pain in you souls. For example, there are those who cut themselves, turn to food or to the restriction of food, and others have gone out, gotten drunk and had sex as a way to punish themselves and those who hurt them.

Others have turned to pornography in an attempt to numb themselves. It seems pornography in part serves as an addicting distraction which provides some weird kind of emotional connection and personal validation enabling a person to avoid dealing with the pain and disturbance in their souls. And still others have turned to serial relationships where there is always someone in their life. Now these relationships never go deep enough to really put them at risk, but just enough to keep them feeling needed and distracted.

I have found that some people choose isolation and get themselves distracted with hobbies like reading, video games, movies, working out, or something else so they don't have to put themselves in relationships that might press on their wounds. The risk of getting hurt is too great for them.

But regardless of how you have learned to cope, when things in your life press in and touch on those internal wounds (even things that are entirely unrelated), you find that you almost automatically resort to your chosen way of numbing your feelings. You know it is dumb, you know it is not really helping, but your body has literally become addicted to coping in this way; and so you continue almost as if you are unaware of what you are doing.

Then God starts pressing in on you and you feel guilty and all, but still you just keep doing what you do for it is the only way you can have some semblance of control over your life—and I mean “semblance” for it is all artificially contrived to make you “feel” as if you have control.

Tell me, what would happen if you actually let yourself feel instead of covering it up? What would happen if you let yourself fully experience the pain and the hurt—be immersed in it? What is the worse that could happen? What are you really afraid of?

Now, I want to explain something about the way that God made each of us in terms of our internal/emotional construct, but I will use the physical body as an example. If we get a significant cut in the arm and do nothing to treat it (or apply the wrong kind of treatment), there is a high likelihood that the wound will become infected. And if it remains untreated that infection can spread to the entire arm and eventually if not cut off that infection will spread to the entire body threatening your very life.

That is pretty much what happens when we are cut emotionally. Unless properly treated, every wound has the potential to rot-out our soul and badly hurt us. Even if we give it some kind of remedial treatment, unless Jesus heals the wound it will continue to give us problems throughout our life. We may keep the infection from spreading through the ways we have learned to sooth ourselves, but it will always be a sensitive spot from which we react out and hurt others.

This is why nothing that we do to cope with our wounds ever does anything to alleviate the pain. It never takes it away; it just temporarily covers it, masks it,

until the right situation pulls it all back out, once again. And the problem is that we tend to deal with our hurt often in a very inappropriate way.

I say inappropriate because when people or situations make us angry or hurt we often respond not just to that situation (as if any of us are really that objective), but to everything that we have festering inside of us. Everything is cumulated into a response where the punishment (our reaction to what someone did in that situation) does not really fit the crime.

This is a real problem and it haunts many of us and has been or will be a bar to our ability to have healthy relationships. It has also been a bar to our having a healthy relationship with God. We so often pretend with Him. Our heart is aching and full of pain, anger, and even rage, but we talk to God all nicely as if He does not know what is really inside of us. It's silly.

This is not the example that David set for us. He is such an interesting man. For some reason, David did not seem to be afraid of his feelings. He did not seem to be afraid of the sadness, loneliness, depression, anger, disillusionment, or feeling as if everything in his life is out of control. He did not like it, that's for sure, but he did something that we must all learn to do and that is to take our pain and our hurt to God. He actually had conversations with God; gut level conversations. He was real and held nothing back.

We don't see David burying things, living in delusion, denial, isolating, acting as if everything is ok, looking for someone or something to numb his pain; instead, he experiences it all and talks about his experience to God. We even see that some of his anger and disappointment is directed straight to God; and he had no qualms about expressing it.

I am going to pull from a number of entries in David's personal journal which help us understand how he coped. You will find that he said it all, he said exactly what he was feeling, and it was not all masked in "religious" talk or spiritual platitudes. For example in ***Psalm 3:7*** he says: "Arise, O Lord! Rescue me, my God! Slap all my enemies in the face! Shatter the teeth of the wicked!" How is that for being honest about your feelings?

Psalm 5:1-3

O Lord, hear me as I pray; pay attention to my groaning. Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for I pray to no one but you. Listen to my voice in the morning, Lord. Each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly.

Psalm 31:9-10

Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am in distress. Tears blur my eyes. My body and soul are withering away. I am dying from grief; my years are shortened by sadness. Sin has drained my strength; I am wasting away from within.

Psalm 34:6-7

In my desperation I prayed, and the Lord listened; he saved me from all my troubles. For the angel of the Lord is a guard; he surrounds and defends all who fear him.

Psalm 142:1-3

I cry out to the Lord; I plead for the Lord's mercy. I pour out my complaints before him and tell him all my troubles. When I am overwhelmed, you alone know the way I should turn.

Psalm 143:7

Come quickly, Lord, and answer me, for my depression deepens.

Psalm 55:4-8, 16-17

My heart pounds in my chest. The terror of death assaults me. Fear and trembling overwhelm me, and I can't stop shaking. Oh, that I had wings like a dove; then I would fly away and rest! I would fly far away to the quiet of the wilderness. How quickly I would escape—far from this wild storm of hatred ... But I will call on God, and the Lord will rescue me. Morning, noon, and night I cry out in my distress, and the Lord hears my voice.

Psalm 5:9-10

My enemies cannot speak a truthful word. Their deepest desire is to destroy others. Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Their tongues are filled with flattery. O God, declare them guilty. Let them be caught in their own traps. Drive them away because of their many sins, for they have rebelled against you.

Psalm 38:4-8

Guilt overwhelms me—it is a burden too heavy to bear. My wounds fester and stink because of my foolish sins. I am bent over and racked with pain. All day long I walk around filled with grief. A raging fever burns within me, and my health is broken. I am exhausted and completely crushed. My groans come from an anguished heart.

David was obviously angry and groaning in pain and he was furious with how he has been treated. He talked to God about his enemies and had no problem expressing what he wanted God to do to them. He was in touch with his pain, his anguish, fear, and what it all did inside of his body. But He let himself experience it even though the experience was wretched.

I think he somehow understood that the pain of locking it in would be more destructive than the pain of experiencing it. He knew that if he tried to take control in this area of his life that he would take control in others as well and not let God be his God. That is an experience that he did not want.

Then there were times when he was even frustrated with God. In ***Psalm 10:1*** he says: “O Lord, why do you stand so far away? Why do you hide when I am in trouble?”

Psalm 13:1-3

Lord, how long will you forget me? Forever? How long will you look the other way? How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul, with sorrow in my

heart every day? How long will my enemy have the upper hand? Turn and answer me, O Lord my God! Restore the sparkle to my eyes, or I will die.

Psalm 22:1-2, 6-8

My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why are you so far away when I groan for help? Every day I call to you, my God, but you do not answer. Every night you hear my voice, but I find no relief ... But I am a worm and not a man. I am scorned and despised by all! Everyone who sees me mocks me. They sneer and shake their heads, saying, "Is this the one who relies on the Lord? Then let the Lord save him! If the Lord loves him so much, let the Lord rescue him!"

Psalm 6:1-3, 6-7

O Lord, don't rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your rage. Have compassion on me, Lord, for I am weak. Heal me, Lord, for my bones are in agony. I am sick at heart. How long, O Lord, until you restore me? ... I am worn out from sobbing. All night I flood my bed with weeping, drenching it with my tears. My vision is blurred by grief; my eyes are worn out because of all my enemies.

When you overlay a few of these Psalms on the stories we read about David in Samuel, things become a little more real and this man David suddenly becomes a bit more human. David was a mighty man of God who was afraid, terrified, in

pain, deeply hurt, angry, sad, depressed, and completely discouraged. He was a normal person, just like you and me.

But the one thing about David is that he was willing to feel all of it and not run from it. He was willing to write it down and even share it with others. He did not try and numb it or escape it, but he let it happen and he learned how to take it all to God and let God be His comforter, for real.

Psalm 18:6

But in my distress I cried out to the Lord; yes, I prayed to my God for help. He heard me from his sanctuary; my cry to him reached his ears.

Psalm 34:6-8

In my desperation I prayed, and the Lord listened; he saved me from all my troubles. For the angel of the Lord is a guard; he surrounds and defends all who fear him. Taste and see that the Lord is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him!

It was only because David took his emotions and feelings to God, and left them there, that he was able to stand in the cave, sword in hand, just inches away from Saul and refuse to lift up his hand against the Lord's anointed. In one moment all his suffering could have been over; but instead of taking things into his own hands, he trusted that God would deal with his enemy.

As we have talked about in **Hebrews 8:10**, God has said that He will be your God; but you have to let Him have the access to your life and stop taking things into your own hands by resorting to all your coping mechanisms that keep you from experiencing all the pain—pain from the past and pain from your now.

I have to tell you, when you resort to your coping mechanisms first, and then throw up a prayer or two asking God to help you, you are declaring that you do not really trust Him to help you; your just hoping that He will. I know—you throw up the prayer hoping He might take pity on you and send a blessing your way; but you don't really think that He is going to be able to comfort you or care for you.

In fact, I have heard many people say: “How is an invisible God going to comfort me and make me feel safe and ok? He can't touch me; I need something physical, someone who is tangible.”

I understand that feeling, but it is not rooted in the Word of God and what God declares to be true about Himself; therefore, it is not faith. And we know that whatever is not of faith is sin (**Romans 14:23; James 4:17**) and that without faith it is impossible to please God (**Hebrews 11:6**). So let's see what the Word of God actually say about this issue:

First of all, the Holy Spirit who lives inside every believer is called the Helper or the Counselor (**John 14:16; 15:26; 16:7**). So He has been given as a guide to tangibly help us through every situation in which we seek His help (and I am sure in many where we don't). He can even help us sort through our past and the things that have given us reason to shut down and cope. For example, Paul explains that the Spirit helps us in our weaknesses.

Romans 8:26-27

And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.

Paul also expressed His experience with the Spirit's comfort during some very dark days when he said:

2 Corinthians 1:3-11

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ.

Then in ***2 Corinthians 7:5-7***, the Lord brought Paul comfort, tangibly, through the body—through the arrival of Titus. Titus' very presence brought joy and encouragement to Paul and his companions. In the same way, the physical affection that we show to each other in this body is an expression of Jesus' love and provides each of us a very tangible sense of God's presence in our lives. The writer of Hebrews also speaks of the help that Jesus brings to us. He says:

Hebrews 2:16-18

We also know that the Son did not come to help angels; he came to help the descendants of Abraham. Therefore, it was necessary for him to be made in every respect like us, his brothers and sisters, so that he could be our merciful and faithful High Priest before God. Then he could offer a sacrifice that would take away the sins of the people. Since he himself has gone through suffering and testing, he is able to help us when we are being tested.

Hebrews 4:14-16

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 7:24-25

But because Jesus lives forever, his priesthood lasts forever. Therefore he is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through him. He lives forever to intercede with God on their behalf.

The point being is that God will help you if you let Him have access; if you come to Him for help. He has been through the pain, the rejection, the abandonment, the abuse, and the betrayal; so He knows how to bring you very specific comfort in your time of need. Let Him help you. David did. So far in David's life what we see is that he trusted God with all of it. So we know it is possible—especially when you consider that the Holy Spirit was with David and on David but did not make His home in David as He does in you and me.

David did not have access to the ***New Creation*** (even though his life is a picture for us of the ***New Creation*** and Saul's life is a picture of the *Old Sinful Nature*). Yet David still let God be his God.

I think this is why David was also able to experience such powerful worship and praise in his life. I don't know this for sure, but I think our experience in praise and worship might just be in proportion to how much we have learned to trust Jesus with our lives. For the more we have, by faith, experienced Him, the more we come to know and be fully convinced that He is good and worthy of praise.

Psalm 40:1-5

I waited patiently for the Lord to help me *{I should stop here as this is probably David's secret that we all need to learn—how to patiently wait for the Lord to help us instead of taking matters into our own hands}*, and he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along. He has given me a new song to sing, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see what he has done and be amazed. They will put their trust in the Lord. Oh, the joys of

those who trust the Lord, who have no confidence in the proud or in those who worship idols. O Lord my God, you have performed many wonders for us. Your plans for us are too numerous to list. You have no equal. If I tried to recite all your wonderful deeds, I would never come to the end of them.

Once you see how God intervenes in your life and provides the help you need, you will find that you will only be able to talk of His greatness and wonder and your mouth will be filled with praise. Your worship will become loud as you speak about the glories of the Lord.

Psalm 63:5-8

You satisfy me more than the richest feast. I will praise you with songs of joy. I lie awake thinking of you, meditating on you through the night. Because you are my helper, I sing for joy in the shadow of your wings. I cling to you; your strong right hand holds me securely.

I want to encourage you tonight to follow the example laid before us. He is our God, He is good, and He wants you to come to Him with everything. He wants you to no longer be afraid to feel. He wants you to let Him help you through your feelings so their suppression does not mutate into something hideous. He wants you to know that as you trust that He is God, He will become very tangible for you, just like He was extremely tangible for David. Again, we find that David says,

“Your unfailing love is better to me than life itself” (*Psalms 63:3*). How is that for tangible?

Far too many of the relational dysfunctions we have all experienced stem from this one issue—the suppression of our feelings. It is time to open up and trust that God is bigger than our pain, bigger than our fears, and far bigger than our past.

It is time to open up and let Him guide you through it all (even all of your past) so He can bring healing to your wounds so you never have to operate out of them ever again. Ask Him to guide you through it and He will. He wants you to have freedom. He wants you to be able to explode in praise and worship. He wants you to know what it is like to have a refuge to which you can run; a refuge where you will always be heard.

Now before we can experience this, unfortunately, we are going to have to make the decision to cut ourselves off from our coping mechanisms that have prevented us from feeling the pain. Remember, faith is always active! This will not be easy and will require you to master your body; but the Spirit will enable you to do just that. Paul addresses this when he says:

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and

make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

Paul had to learn how to control his body so it did not control him. Paul was just like you and me and I am sure he had many, many coping mechanisms (religion being his biggest). He had to learn to no longer let the addictions of his body control his choices. He had to refuse to follow his coping mechanisms. And, by the way, the self-control that he mentions just happens to be a fruit of the Spirit, a fruit of trusting yourself to Jesus.

So if you are sad, then let yourself feel sad. Don't try and stop it. If you are going through a time of depression let yourself experience it. If you have anger, then go ahead and feel it and express it to God. None of these emotions have to define you; they do not have to mark your life. As we know David's despair did not stop him from caring for those who followed him or from doing all that the Lord asked him to do. It similarly does not have to limit or inhibit you from caring for others and loving them more than you love yourself.

Letting yourself feel the pain and work through the experience of it all is not an opportunity to self-obsess (as some of us have made it). When Jesus suffered, He still loved. When Paul suffered, he still loved. When David suffered, he still loved. When you take things to God He enables you to still do what He desires.

But if you ignore refuse to work through the pain, suppress it, or numb it, eventually it will mark your life and hurt you and others. It is only through letting yourself have the experience that you are going to be able to come to God and talk to Him about all of it and learn how to leave it all with Him. David learned this

and I know that we can all learn how to do this as well. I believe it is part of the pathway to freedom.

I encourage you to go back and listen to Faces of Love 4e and 6b they both dovetail nicely into this teaching and give a good framework for understanding our wounds and the need for us to seek healing from Jesus.

You see it makes sense why David was included in the Hall of Faith.

Let's Pray.