

The Kindness of God

2 Samuel 9

The great physicist Albert Einstein wisely said “Assumptions are made and most assumptions are wrong.” Quite frankly we all make assumptions on a daily basis. AND more times than not our assumptions are wrong and cause us to hurt others whom we’ve assumed false information about. Or we hurt ourselves by overlooking the truth and accepting a lie.

To assume, simply means to accept something as truth without questioning or proof, which often results in us allowing lies into our hearts. Lies about yourself. About your spouse. About a long time friend. Lies about complete strangers you have never spoken a word too. About our leaders in government.

Here’s a few assumptions we make about others and ourselves:

1. If I ignore the problem, it will go away.
2. I have enough time for the exam, I will start studying tomorrow.
3. No one is talking to me, so that means no one likes me.
4. They look have a smile on their face, so they must be happy.
5. He/She is young, so they are naive.
6. I didn’t get invited, so I must not be good enough to be their friend.
7. AND listen... Never. I mean NEVER assume it is ever okay for you to ask a woman if she is pregnant or not... Research shows this to be true!

The problem is that **to assume is to take** the easy way out! **Instead let’s ask questions!** Search for the truth, before assuming something is true just because the people around you say it is true... Assuming is risky business!

We should be careful assuming things about others and even ourselves... What is far worse though is when we begin to assume things about God. We start to make assumptions about Him BASED on what we hear and see in the world around us. But the world is in direct rebellion against God! The world system only wants to feed you lies about God and pressures you to believe the lies are true because... well majority of people accept it as truth! The propaganda posters denying God’s true character are posted at every street corner, in every media outlet, in the school systems, denying His love for you, denying the work of Jesus, exclaiming that God is full of wrath and is out to get you...

Do you want to understand more of who God your Creator is? Do you want to know further depths of His love for you? Well if you do... ASK Him! Instead of listening to the world about God, we must ask God Himself to reveal who He is! Sometimes we feel like it has to be so complicated to know more about God, but friend it doesn’t have to be so...

He has given us this Bible, the written words of God, to learn and know more of Him. Yet we somehow still let the world's vantage point on God into the equation. We must cling to His perfect, canonized, Holy Scripture and REJECT the weakness of our limited fleshly minds and the influence of the world around us.

Don't assume things are true about God before you have honestly tried to hear Him out... You may end up believing in a lie...

In chapter 9 of 2 Samuel we find a man who believed a lie about his king for a long portion of his life without ever actually meeting the king. It's a remarkable story and I am sure God has something He wants to say to us this morning if we are willing to hear from Him! He wants to show us who He is...

2 Samuel chapter 9, beginning in verse 1...

2 Samuel 9:1 - Now David said, "Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him [a]kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

At this point in David's life, he is at the height of his glory as king. He is reigning over all of Israel. He has defeated many enemies again and again. All of the surrounding nations have been conquered and brought under his command. His people loved him! It was just a great season of triumph in his life.

And at this time in history it was customary when a new dynasty came replaced the previous, the new dynasty would find everybody that was related to the old dynasty, and kill them. Mass murder of the old dynasty. They would do this because if you left anyone alive that could have a claim/right to the throne under the previous dynasty, they might come back to try and overthrow you and take back the throne.

So it is no wonder that David in verse asks, [is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul](#), the previous dynasty! All the kings of that day ask that question! And it usually ends, [is there still anyone who is left](#), so that I may kill them... But no David asks so that he may [show him kindness for Jonathan's sake](#). David remembers the close relationship he had with Jonathan, the son of Saul, who was supposed to be the rightful heir to the throne of Saul! And though Jonathan was heir, he knew that God would make David king. And Jonathan supported David and dearly loved him!

1 Samuel 18:1 says Jonathan loved David as his own soul... And in a dramatic expression of his commitment to God's calling on David, Jonathan takes off his royal robe and gives it David, saying, "David I know people think I am next to be king, but I know that you will be!" And Jonathan asks David to make a covenant with him, "David when you become king, don't act like the other kings and kill off the descendants of the previous king. Be kind to my descendants."

And David now remembers the promises he made to Jonathan, who had long ago already died. David, the man after God's own heart, knew he must fulfill his promise to his dear friend. I remember that covenant I made with him, is there anyone left that I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?

As we are about to find out as we make our way through the text, there was in fact one man of the lineage of Jonathan left. Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth. David is going to show Mephibosheth the **kindness of God** and is going to do so in 3 phases:

1. Seeks Mephibosheth
2. Restores Mephibosheth
3. Adopts Mephibosheth

Let's continue into the text, verse 2 reads...

2 Samuel 9:2-5 - And there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba. So when they had called him to David, the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?"

He said, "At your service!"

3 Then the king said, "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show the kindness of God?"

And Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan who is lame in his feet."

4 So the king said to him, "Where is he?"

And Ziba said to the king, "Indeed he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo Debar."

5 Then King David sent and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar.

PHASE #1 : David SEEKS Mephibosheth

David begins to search for a descendant of Saul to show the kindness of God. And naturally, if there is anyone left from Saul's family they are in **hiding**, assuming that David (the new reigning king) is wanting to kill them. So David finds Ziba, a servant who used to serve the household of Saul and asks him "Is there someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show the kindness of God?"

Ziba is caught off guard and tells David that Jonathan's son is still alive, but he's hesitant to give David his name. I mean could David actually want to show kindness to a man who technically have a right to HIS own throne? I imagine Ziba is thinking that this must be a trap!

Look back at verse 3 though, David doesn't want to kill Saul's grandson, rather he wants to show his descendant the **kindness of God!** What a testament to the type of man David was... Saul was his enemy! Saul did everything in his power to destroy David and attempted time and time again to kill him! Yet David chooses to love him.

And David didn't just offer the kindness of man, but rather he said he would give the kindness of God. Realize this means that the kindness of God is not only God's to give. He gives it to us so then WE can go give it to other people too.

So there is the kindness of man and then there is the kindness of God. Now the kindness of man isn't bad... I'd rather have the kindness of man versus the cruelty of man. But the kindness of man isn't anything close to the kindness of God. AND there's the forgiveness of man and then there is the forgiveness of God. And I'd rather have man's forgiveness than man's revenge, but nothing can compare to the forgiveness of God...

Here's how the forgiveness of man works - I will forgive you if you promise to NEVER do that to me again... If I know that you'll do it again then I just won't actually forgive you... **Who's glad God doesn't work this way... None of us would be forgiven!** The forgiveness of man says, I will only forgive you if YOU are really really really sorry, and YOU say all the right things to me, if YOU take the blame, and YOU have to initiate it all. Then I'll forgive you.

Oh but the forgiveness of God is far greater. God says I'll initiate it. I will forgive you and I will take all of your penalty/blame and put it on my Son Jesus on the cross.

Brother and sister, the forgiveness of man can only do so much... maybe you've been struggling in a relationship. Or you are trying to show kindness to that one person but it is just so hard to do it. Realize the forgiveness of man is never enough in any relationship. David Guzik said it well, "You've tried your best with the kindness of man, but now it's time to break out the kindness of God. The forgiveness He gave you! You can give it to someone else."

And the man whom David wants to show the kindness of God to is Mephibosheth, who we know is crippled in his feet. 2 Samuel 4 tells us how he came to be lame in his feet. When Mephibosheth was only 5 years old, news came back to the house that his grandfather King Saul, and his father Jonathan were dead... And everyone in the house knew this meant now all the descendants of Saul have targets on their backs to kill them. So they decide they have to leave quickly, they must run away immediately... Mephibosheth's babysitter frantically starts grabbing things to flee the house and picks him up to carry him away. In the midst of the panic and chaos, she somehow trips and falls, dropping Mephibosheth to the ground, and the bones in his legs shatter... He never healed properly and was left to be crippled for the rest of his life...

HOW TRAGIC! I mean imagine, at 5 years old being told "grandpa is dead. Daddy is dead. We have to run..." As their fleeing and Mephibosheth is trying to understand what is happening and how to feel know that his dad is dead, that grandpa is dead, and he falls out the nurses grasp and his bones shatter! A 5 year old only wants to try to run as fast as they can! Mephibosheth probably wanted to grow up to be like his dad, a mighty strong warrior. He wanted to be 7 foot tall like grandpa! But no... not for Mephibosheth. Crippled at the age of 5.

And this is when we see Mephibosheth begins to assume things about David. He learns from the people around that King David is who he needs to hide from, that David is just waiting out there somewhere to get him... David wants to kill you. You need to keep hiding. **Mephibosheth life becomes engulfed in fear.** No family. No freedom to live. He doesn't have a home of his own. He is too poor to be

able to afford to live on his own. HE lives in Lo Debar which literally means “Not a pasture”. WARNING This is not pasture land, you do not want to live here! I imagine he is terrified of David! He might even blame David for his own misfortune...

And Mephibosheth in verse 5 hears the soldiers knocking at the door as he is in the back room hiding. The king’s men say “we are looking for a man named Mephibosheth is he here?” Mephibosheth’s heart sinks... “I knew this day was coming. David is going to kill me... He finally found me...

BUT David would not relent to find him so that he could show him the kindness of God! David found Ziba! David asked where is Mephibosheth? Tell me where is he? HE dispatched his soldiers immediately to go find him. NOT because he wants to kill him! David pursued after Mephibosheth because he loves him!

VERSE 6.

2 Samuel 9:6 - Now when Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, had come to David, he fell on his face and prostrated himself. Then David said, “Mephibosheth?”

And he answered, “Here is your servant!”

It’s almost as if Mephibosheth just blurts out, “please don’t kill me! I know you’re probably going to but please just don’t! Please!” He is absolutely terrified. But realize, **Mephibosheth’s fear was all based on assumption, not facts.** The TRUTH about David was that David loved Mephibosheth even before Mephibosheth loved David. David cared about him and wanted to restore him before he even came close to David.

The TRUTH is that when David looked into Mephibosheth’s eyes, he saw his father Jonathan. His dear friend. He saw the promise he made with Jonathan staring back at him...

2 Samuel 9:7 - So David said to him, “Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father’s sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather; and you shall eat bread at my table continually.”

PHASE #2: Restores Mephibosheth.

The first thing Mephibosheth hears from the man he’s awaiting death from is “**Do not fear.**” David says that for your father’s sake, I will give you all the land that has been rightfully yours all along. Up until this point David didn’t know there was a descendant of Saul still alive to claim the land, so David was taking care of it, but since Mephibosheth is in the picture now, all of Saul’s old land is all for Mephibosheth. And you can come and eat bread at my table... Come have a close relationship with me... Mephibosheth probably can’t believe this is happening! His entire life he thought that David was waiting to kill him, only to find out that David was waiting to restore to him everything he lost and more! It is pretty unbelievable which is why in verse 8 Mephibosheth...

2 Samuel 9:8 - Then he bowed himself, and said, “What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?”

After living basically his whole life up to this point in hiding, in fear, crippled it makes sense why he was convinced he is worthless. That's what he thought about himself. AND that is what we think about ourselves when we are in that same place of fear, crippled by sin, hiding away... We feel worthless, as worthless as a dead dog. A dead dog has no real value...

But David did not come just restore physical stuff and land to Mephibosheth. He came to restore the way Mephibosheth thought about himself. "You are not worthless. You're my friend! I love you... You have so much value in my eyes, so come join my table. Spend time with me..."

Let me show you... verse 9...

2 Samuel 9:9-13 - And the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "I have given to your master's son all that belonged to Saul and to all his house. 10 You therefore, and your sons and your servants, shall work the land for him, and you shall bring in the harvest, that your master's son may have food to eat. But Mephibosheth your master's son shall eat bread at my table always." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

11 Then Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king has commanded his servant, so will your servant do."

"As for Mephibosheth," said the king, "he shall eat at my table like one of the king's sons." 12 Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Micha. And all who dwelt in the house of Ziba were servants of Mephibosheth. 13 So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king's table. And he was lame in both his feet.

All of these people you see here now work for you Mephibosheth. They belong to you and will work your land for you. And you won't be needing to rely on them and your land in order to eat, but YOU will eat from the king's table like my son!

PHASE #3: Adopts Mephibosheth.

And as an adopted son of the king, you get to sit at the table with the king himself. Mephibosheth is probably thinking, "pinch me I must be dreaming!" All of Mephibosheth's assumptions of David were crushed by the truth of David's love for him...

He found me, he gave me my life back, and gave me more than I ever had as an adopted son... what a deal! And in verse 13 we see Mephibosheth is dwelling in the kingdom of the God. He is no longer separated from the king. He is no longer in poverty. But did his crippled feet magically turn into new feet? No. His weaknesses are still. He is much better, but still is lame. But I have no doubts that the way he sees himself was radically changed! Worthless? I don't think so, I eat at the table of the king...

I want to go ahead and make a statement that I have been already hinting at up to this point as we've gone through the story of David and Mephibosheth...

YOU ARE MEPHIBOSHETH.

Before your King came to you, you were hiding from him in sin. You were weak and crippled by the flesh. Living in fear assuming that God would strike you down on the spot for all of the horrible sins you've committed...

You were separated from your king because of your wicked ancestors... Mephibosheth was separated from David first because of who Saul was. You were separated from God because of what ole' Adam did and you inherited.

Mephibosheth was separated from his king because of his own actions... Because he chose to live in hiding. Imagine what life could've been like if Mephibosheth showed up 10 years earlier at David's throne... We were separated from the Heavenly Father because of our actions in choosing to sin against Him.

You are like Mephibosheth because your King sought you before you ever sought Him. David sought him first. Ephesians 1:4 says, ["4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,"](#) He chose you before there was anything but Him that existed.

You are like Mephibosheth because the kindness that is extended to you was for the sake of another person. David was kind for the sake of Jonathan. God pours out His forgiveness on you for the sake of Jesus Christ on the cross. Nothing is given to you because of you, but all because of Jesus.

You are like Mephibosheth because God's kindness is based on a covenant.

You are like Mephibosheth because He restores to you what you've lost. He has restored you with blessings, strength, given you fellowship with Him.

You are like Mephibosheth because he returns to you more than what you lost. We gain more in Jesus than we ever lost in Adam! He imparts His righteousness on you.

You are like Mephibosheth because you get to dine at His table as a son and as a daughter of the living God. He's given you complete access to Him, 24/7 opportunity to fellowship with Him. And a wedding feast awaits us in heaven and we will sit at the table as sons and daughters, and be joined together with Jesus.

Where are you personally right now though? Are you Mephibosheth after having already come to the Lord's table, and after having already received his free gift of grace. Christian, have you been showing up to dinner at the King's Table or are you at Waffle House eating an All-Star Special? Just think of what God has given us in Christ and then think of our neglect to abide in Christ at the table... Man this convicts me! He has a place set for me at the table 24/7 and yet sometimes I'm not there and I'm at man's table...

What we have offered to us is open fellowship with the creator of the universe, and for some reason I still sometime choose to eat a Big Mac instead?

Or you eating the worlds Big Mac meal, which can't satisfy? You'll eat all 1200 calories of it and regret it the next day. Or you eating from the Lord's table which is satisfying, nutritious, and strengthening?

Ask yourself, am I remaining at the Lord's Table, or at the table of man? Because what happens is when you stop showing up for dinner, your old fears trickle back in... The way you used to view yourself enters into your mind... You start to doubt the truth again... Son and daughter of God stay at His table, there is no place that can even come close to comparing...

I believe someone here today is the OLD Mephibosheth who is still stuck in fear, hiding from God because you have grown up to assume God is just out to get me... That God doesn't actually love me, or you have just done too many horrible and sinful things, there is no way He could want anything to do with you but send you to hell... Friend, stop assuming what the world has to say about God is true. He is revealing Himself to you right now. He is pursuing you right and wants to restore you and adopt you as His child...

AND the TRUTH is that God has loved you before He created anything and He loves you so much that He sent His only Son Jesus to die on the cross to pay for your sins and remove your guilt and penalty for sin. HE paid the price for you so that you can be freed from the fear of death! Luke 19:10 says, ["the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."](#) The verse doesn't say Jesus came to save the people who lived the purest life, or save the people who cleaned up their life then came to Him. No He came to save the lost. He came to save all of mankind. He died to save you... Don't waste another moment trying to "be a better person" or get your life cleaned up so God will accept you. He is ready to forgive you now and give you His free gift of grace.

Let's pray...

Remember that you and I are just as poor and needy as Mephibosheth and we must continually recognize our need for a Wonderful Savior.

I pray that you will see the love God has always had for you, and confess and repent. And receive the gift of salvation and your place at table of the King. If you have never made the decision to follow Jesus and would like to do so today, we will have prayer counselors who would love to lead you in a prayer. I will be down here and would love to pray with you as well..