



The Southeast Sower

Southeast Church of Christ

Volume 29 Issue 4

April 2014

“Being Real”

by

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Have you ever met someone who you immediately knew was completely genuine and real? Someone who was so real, so authentic and so open-hearted that even after just a short amount of time talking to them you walked away wanting to get to know them better, or thought to your self what a great friend they would make. It seems like it doesn't happen often enough, yet when it does it feels like a breath of fresh air.

When you meet such people you often realize that with them, what comes through loud and clear on the outside is what lies deep within on the inside. They are the epitome of the phrase, “what you see is what you get,” (in a good or positive sense in this case.)

With them there is no pretentious “putting on airs”, no patronizing compliments, no shameless self-promotion, no insincere motives, and no blank stares or robotic “nice meeting you's.” There's just no going through the

motions with these people. No. These type of people are authentic. They are genuine. They are real!

Isn't that what we all desire in others, especially in our friendships? A spirit of integrity that is secure in our own self, genuine in our treatment of others, and humbly open-hearted about who we are? It is a trait that is difficult to describe in one word, but we know it when we see it. One thing is clear. Those who have it have an uncanny ability to develop great friendships. In fact, I would say it is the foundation of establishing any relationship, as quite simply, real friendships require real people!

Throughout the Holy Scriptures we see God's desire for “real people.” Keep in mind that nowhere in God's word are we told that God demands perfect people, for after all we are all men, and there are no perfect men. But He does demand that we be “real people.” It is an absolute necessity for serving and having a relationship with Him, and it begins with one's heart.

No one in the Bible exemplifies this trait more than David. While David was just a man like the rest of us and had more than his

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SERVICES:

Sunday

Bible Study: 10:00 am

Worship: 10:50 am

6:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7:30 pm

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share of faults, he was open-hearted, authentic and real. And it was this true-hearted authenticity that God took notice of in selecting a king, “*But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.”* (1 Sam. 16:7). And Psalms 78:70-72 describes what God saw in

David that he did not see to the same extent in his brothers, *“He also chose David His servant, □And took him from the sheepfolds;*

From following the ewes that had young He brought him, □To shepherd Jacob His people, □And Israel His inheritance. So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, □And guided them by the skillfulness of his hands.” Notice that David had “integrity of heart.” He was authentic and real. He was a man “after God’s own heart” (Acts 13:22), and despite his shortcomings, I believe it was this quality that sealed his legacy as a leader of God’s people as we read in Acts 13:36, *““For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep...”* It certainly says something about the importance of the true heart of a man who God describes in scripture as having a “heart of integrity”, “a man after His own heart”, and then writing over top of his life that this is a man who “served the purpose of God in His own generation.” He was certainly a man remembered for his real, authentic heart.

What was it that made David’s heart so memorable, that we can learn from?

As stated, David had a heart of integrity. The word

“integrity” is derived from the mathematical term “integer” which is a whole number. A number that is not fractioned, but rather one, singular, or simple. The dictionary defines “simple” as “consisting of one part, “without additions”, “without ostentation, unpretending.” Through good and bad, that describes David perfectly. In his successes he was singular in his praise and adoration for God, and in his sin he was wholly crushed, and heartbroken about it. That is the type of heart God desires. That is the type of heart God can use, work with, shape, and mold. One that is simply authentic and real.

We can see that heart at work even when David was a shepherd boy when he confronted Goliath. When David arrived in the valley of Elah and saw Goliath mocking God, and the army of Israel, he saw the situation in a very straightforward way. As a result, one simple-hearted shepherd boy singularly took action over grown men lacking heart and immobilized by fear and slayed a giant. Not by physical strength, military strategy, or tactical brilliance, but by simply letting his real, authentic heart be known to the Philistine, the army of Israel, and to God. *“Then David said to the Philistine,*

“You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. 47 Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord’s, and He will give you into our hands.” All this while King Saul, tall in physical stature, standing head and shoulders above everyone else, the purported champion of his nation, cowered indecisively in his tent and refused to be the “real man” the people needed.

In trying circumstances someone needs to step up, stand in the gap, and go one-on-one with the problem. That position is reserved for those with hearts of integrity. Saul didn’t have it when he needed it. David did. And the “real adults” sitting solemnly on their hands rather than leading learned something about having a “heart of integrity” from the littlest guy in the valley.

May we learn the same lesson. Here’s to “being

real.” Here’s to the
shepherd boy in all of us.