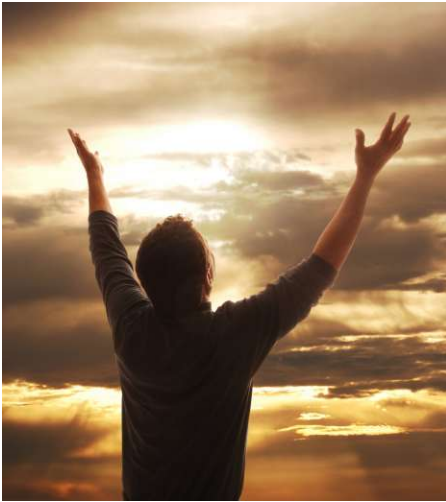


## Following God's Heart

Pastor Ivan Leung



**F**ollowing through with the theme of our April Family News, I would like to share on the important topic of **Spiritual Leadership** in this issue. On the one hand, I want to thank the brothers and sisters who serve in different capacities of the ministry at VCAC, and on the other hand we must continue to strive to become spiritual leaders who are acceptable in God's sight, because God values "who we are" more than "what we do".

The Bible records David's life in detail. From the time he was anointed as king, he was praised by God as a person after His own heart. ...*the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you (Saul) have not kept the LORD's command.* (1 Samuel 13:14) The Lord said he was a man after His own heart or it can be said that he is the kind of man God wants. Even after David's death, God still praised him as a man after His own heart. *He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son*

*"From a shepherd to a King with authority, David ascribed all his victories to the redeeming grace of the Lord."*

*of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'* (Acts 13:22) What factors are required in order to become a man after God's own heart?

**First, David emphasizes God's glory, so that His name will be great forever.** *Then men will say, 'The LORD Almighty is God over Israel!' And the house of your servant David will be established before you.* (2 Samuel 7:26) This is David's prayer before the Lord: May your name be glorified. David's goal in life is to glorify God. During the reign of David, he emphasized that the focus of the kingdom should not be on the king and his court, nor on worshipping himself, but on serving and worshipping God. Therefore, David desired to build God's temple, so that the entire Israel nation would worship the only true God, glorify Him and lift Him up as the center of worship.

During David's prosperous reign, his heart is focused entirely on glorifying God. At the summit of his life, it was invaluable that David ruled to glorify God. It is not uncommon for people to cry out to God for mercy in trying times, but people will tend to forget God at times of peace and prosperity. Not King David.

*Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?"* (Luke 17:17-18)

This passage is a significant reminder for me: in all circumstances, give thanks to the Lord; glory belongs to the Lord, not us.

I remember during my graduation ceremony at Western Seminary, the faculty dean gave us the following enduring advice: "Use the honour that you receive today to honour God in your lifetime." Brothers and sisters, please accept this advice as your personal motto, using the honour and achievement in your life to honour God, for glory belongs to God.

**Second, David experiences God's presence.** One of the servants of Saul commented, *"I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the harp. He is a brave man and a warrior. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man. And the LORD is with him."* (1 Samuel 16:18) This description came not from David himself, but from a young servant of Saul. This young man knew David and appreciated his various attributes: a skilled harpist, a brave warrior, and a handsome young man who speaks well. More importantly, this young man felt God's presence with David.

David possessed different talents and God's presence, so he became a blessed man after God's own heart. We have learned precious lessons from David's life. If we possess many good things and talents, but do not have God or His presence, then our

value of life is still very limited. As Jesus said, "What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26)

David treasured God's presence and this beautiful attribute made an impact on others. Dear brothers and sisters, we live in an unsettling and troubled world, with unemployment, family and interpersonal issues and insecurities. But God's presence brings us love, strength and protection. Although the human eye cannot perceive God's presence, our faith confirms that "Emmanuel, God be with us", in all circumstances.

**Third, David understands God's power.** *He put garrisons throughout Edom, and all the Edomites became subject to David. The LORD gave David victory wherever he went.* (2 Samuel 8:14) This verse explains how David understands God's almighty power, and is willing to submit to the Lord. No matter where he went, David was steadfast in his belief that "For the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands." (1 Samuel 17:45-47) Recognizing God's sovereign power was David's best attribute, based on which he built his reliance on God.

As we launch into the Multi-Site Church Model, God uses His word to

remind us that not by any special model or structure, but by His might and timing will His church prosper. *I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.* (1 Corinthians 3:6-7) Let our lens focus on Jesus Christ. Let us pray for the church with one heart, so that God's blessing will continue to grow in quality, quantity, depth and breadth.

**Fourthly, David responded to God's grace with gratitude.** *Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and he said: "Who am I, O Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?"* (2 Samuel 7:18) That was David's prayer before the Lord. David became King of Israel and enjoyed peace by overcoming his enemies. From a shepherd to a King with authority, David ascribed all his victories to the redeeming grace of the Lord. David proclaimed, *"...Is this your usual way of dealing with man, O Sovereign LORD?"* (2 Samuel 7:19) David was never conceited, for he was well aware that God *"had brought him thus far,"* and he had decided to hold on to the blessing in gratitude.

Praise the Lord, God has been leading our church since 1966. Looking back, we can only see abundant grace. God has led us from 10th Avenue to Knight Street, from Knight Street to Fraser Lands; from monolingual

(Cantonese) to bilingual (Cantonese/English) and to trilingual (Cantonese/English/Mandarin) ministry. At this point of time, God has given us the opportunity to establish a third site through the Multi-Site Church Model. We can conclude that every thing is a result of God's grace. (Psalm 127:1) We must count our blessing with one heart, so that we may become a congregation who acknowledges our blessing, accepts graciously and pays back with a grateful heart to extend God's Kingdom.

Acts 13:36 describes David's life in such a light: *For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed.* Can this line be applied to our lives? There are two basic questions worth pondering. Firstly, what am I living for? Secondly, how should I live? Dear brothers and sisters, I wish you have found the right answer. I believe God has a perfect plan for each of us. May you strive not only to understand but also to live up to God's very purpose for your life. May you strive to become a man or woman after His own heart, one who fulfils God's plan for you.

**Blessings,  
Pastor Ivan Leung**

# VCAC Core Values

## Equipping The Saints

Equipping the saints is essential to prepare God's people for works of service so that the Body of Christ may be built up (Ephesians 4:12). We believe in identifying and training emerging Godly leaders to pass on the baton of our faith, hope, and love in Christ to present and future generations (II Timothy 2:2).

**Ephesians 4:12** *To prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.*

**II Timothy 2:2** *And the things you heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.*