



Christ Lutheran Church

605 South Fifth Street • Norfolk, NE 68701

Share God's Word, share His love, and do it now!

Pastor Chip Winter, Director of Ministries

"Nathan Confronts David." – 2 Samuel 7:4-29

3rd Midweek in Lent – February 28, 2018

Pastor Chip Winter

Grace to you and Peace, from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Amen. The text for our sermon is the Old Testament lesson appointed for the day and already read for us from 2 Samuel.

Have you ever had to tell your boss you were wrong? (Show of hands). Yeah; me, too. Have you ever had to tell your boss that your boss was wrong? (Show of hands). Yeah; me, too. Have you ever had to tell the most powerful man in the world – to his face, mind you – that his dreams for the future were completely off base? Yeah; that's me.

For a moment, all the pride and wrath of a powerful monarch rested on King David's brow like a crown. I actually thought that I might die. But then I could see a transformation taking place...But I'm getting ahead of myself.

I am Nathan, prophet of the Most High God. You probably know my name, but did you know Nathan means gift – Nathaniel, gift of God? You can probably imagine that my job sometimes isn't a gift. That can be when you speak the hard truth of God. But it can also be when you were wrong. And I had been wrong – though I'm not entirely sure it was my fault.

It happened this way. David had finally ascended the throne of a united kingdom. He'd conquered Jerusalem and set up his capital city there. Then we brought the tent of the presence of

God up to Jerusalem: that Tabernacle had housed the Ark of the Covenant ever since the days of Moses. Now the LORD'S tent was pitched in the shadow of King David's palace.

You should have seen the King dance before the Ark! Some, such as his wife, thought the king made a fool of himself as we marched and the crowds cheered. But the reckless abandon of King David's dance and the clear voice of his song showed that our monarch owed allegiance to a greater King! David had a beautiful voice and He danced with the grace of a true athlete – the seasoned warrior that he was.

So, the Ark camped in a crude shelter while King David enjoyed a palace. I think that inequity rankled the king more than he let on. King David knew what it was like to sleep in an army tent, or in a secret cave, or out in the open air. Now, with his power consolidated, his crown secure, it seemed somehow vulgar to have the Almighty God's presence camped in a lean-to that King David could see through his window.

So, the King called in the prophet (indicate self); always a good idea when making big plans. The king shared with me his sweeping vision for a house of the Ark of the Covenant, a Temple for the Mercy Seat of the LORD'S dwelling. If the king had a house of cedar, then so should God; our monarch allegiance to a far greater King.

So I told the king what prophets are supposed to tell kings – the same instructions which had been given the previous king Saul: **“Once the Holy Spirit has come upon you from on high, do what your hand finds to do; God is with you.”** I honestly couldn't have known it was wrong!

King David was anointed with the Holy Spirit! He was a man after the LORD'S own heart! David knew he owed his reign to the God he called King! Who else could build a house for God's name? But I was wrong.

The LORD showed up to give that verdict to David. Actually, God's Word came to me and I had to take it to David. Did I mention my job is not always a gift?

I had to tell King David that this is what the LORD Almighty says, **“You want to build a house for me? No. No, no, David. I AM going to build a house for you. Your son can build my house, the Temple. But I will build your house, a Dynasty. A Son of David will one day sit upon an eternal throne; and I will be to Him and Father and He will be My own beloved Son, with Whom I am well pleased. And when that Son of David ascends His throne, His reign will have not end.”**

The more I think about it, I wasn't sent so much to tell David that his dream for the future was all wrong, but that it was too small. David wasn't going to get what he wanted. But what God wanted to give was so much more than David could imagine.

Still, it's no easy or simple matter to tell the king he cannot have what he wants. When I arrived he was in high spirits, making his plans to establish God's dwelling permanently in the capital city. I had to get his attention away from the royal architects, the stone masons and carpenters.

As I told King David he had to let go of his own dreams for the future, his face hardened and his eyes grew dark. He dismissed the builders coldly. The pride and wrath of a powerful monarch rested on David's brow like a crown. But as I spoke the Word of God I could actually see a transformation taking place.

As I spoke God's future over David, the proud king melted away and the shepherd boy returned. David was letting go of his own dream for God's future and embracing God's dream for his future.

When I finished the king grabbed me by the elbow and steered me out of the palace to the Tabernacle. David hadn't come to study the structure or discuss the improvements he'd had in mind.

He'd come to pray. And how the king prayed. He poured words out to God in much the same way he'd danced days before – with total abandon. **“Who am I, Lord, that you should make such promises to me?”** The humble, simple shepherd boy was back. David was always a better king when he was the shepherd first. The shepherd boy knew he depended upon his true King for everything he had!

David latched on to the promise of a royal heir, a Son of David, to sit upon the eternal throne; a ruler whom God claimed as His beloved Son. David heard the promise, receiving it and letting go of his own dreams.

What kind of God puts His own comfort aside to make promises to His people? What kind of divine will commits to individuals with sketchy pasts and unreliable futures? What kind of God replaces our small dreams for the future with His grand plans for us? (out of character).

We gather here, tonight, because we know the promise of the Royal Son of David sitting on an eternal throne has been fulfilled in Christ Jesus. Jesus, the Son of David born in Bethlehem, raised upon a cross, buried in the earth, was raised from the dead after sacrificing for the forgiveness of our sins. He is the One enthroned on high for all eternity. He will come again to establish the eternal kingdom He own for us through His passion, death and resurrection.

There are those times when our desires for the future, our dreams for how we think life ought to be, must be abandon. That is when, with David, we need to look with eyes of faith to the promises already fulfilled in Jesus, the Lord of our life. He is the One Who has overcome sin, death

and everlasting condemnation for us and we can trust that His plans for our future are strong, merciful and everlasting. Amen.