HUDSON'S HOPE CHAPEL

Grace at the King's Table

July 26, 2026 · Series: Small Stories, Big Faith · Luke Hughes-Bunger

> **Main Passage:** 2 Samuel 9:1-13 (ESV)
>
> **Big Idea:** We are invited to the King's table, not because we deserve to be there, but because God, our ultimate King, is more good than we can imagine.

Grace Begins with the King's Initiative

2 Samuel 9:1-5

David begins with a surprising question:

> *"Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" (2 Samuel 9:1)*

Saul had been Israel's first king. He had also spent years hunting David and trying to destroy him. By 2 Samuel 9, Saul is dead, Jonathan is dead, and David is established as king.

In the ancient world, surviving members of a former royal house were often treated as threats. A grandson of Saul could become a rival claimant to the throne.

So David's question could have sounded dangerous.

But David is not looking for someone to remove. He is looking for someone to bless.

David wants to show "the kindness of God" (2 Samuel 9:3). This is covenant kindness: loyal love, steadfast love, committed mercy. David is remembering the promise he made to Jonathan.

Ziba tells David that Jonathan still has a son. His name is Mephibosheth, though Ziba first identifies him by his limitation: "he is crippled in his feet" (2 Samuel 9:3).

We should handle that carefully. Mephibosheth's disability does not make him less valuable. He is an image-bearer of God. His disability is part of his life, but it is not his whole identity.

In that world, though, it did make him vulnerable. He had no army, no power base, and no obvious way to make his own return to royal favour. He is living in Lo-debar, away from the palace and centre of power.

Then David says, "Where is he?"

And verse 5 says:

> *"Then King David sent and brought him..." (2 Samuel 9:5)*

That is grace.

Mephibosheth does not climb his way to the king. He does not negotiate terms. He does not make himself useful enough to be noticed.

The king seeks him.

That matters because many of us assume God works the other way around. We assume God waits for us to become respectable enough, spiritual enough, consistent enough, or clean enough to approach Him.

But the gospel does not begin with our climb up to God. It begins with God's gracious movement toward us.

Jesus says:

> *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." (Luke 19:10)*

Grace begins with the King's initiative.

Grace Answers Fear with Covenant Kindness

2 Samuel 9:6-8

Mephibosheth comes before David and falls on his face.

He knows who he is. He is Jonathan's son, but he is also Saul's grandson. He belongs to the house that opposed David.

David says his name:

> *"Mephibosheth!" (2 Samuel 9:6)*

Mephibosheth answers:

> *"Behold, I am your servant." (2 Samuel 9:6)*

Then David's first words to him are:

> *"Do not fear..." (2 Samuel 9:7)*

Those words matter. Mephibosheth may have expected judgment. He may have expected suspicion. He may have expected the king to see him as a threat.

Instead, David says:

> *"Do not fear, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan..." (2 Samuel 9:7)*

Mephibosheth is not welcomed because he has leverage. He is not welcomed because David needs him. He is not welcomed because he has earned a seat.

He is welcomed because of a covenant made with another.

That gives us a clear path to Christ.

David is an imperfect king. But in this moment, David's covenant kindness points beyond himself to the greater Son of David, Jesus Christ.

The gospel says that everyone who belongs to Jesus is welcomed by God for another's sake.

Not because our record is clean.

Not because our faith has never wavered.

Not because our obedience has been flawless.

But because Jesus Christ has lived, died, and risen for His people.

He is the covenant keeper. He is the faithful Son. He is the true King who comes for the helpless.

Because of Him, God speaks a better word over fearful sinners than we ever expected to hear:

> *"Do not fear."*

Fear says, "If God sees the real you, you are finished."

Shame says, "Stay hidden."

Pride says, "Work harder. Prove yourself."

But grace says, "Do not fear. The King's kindness rests on something stronger than you."

Mephibosheth responds with astonishment:

> *"What is your servant, that you should show regard for a dead dog such as I?" (2 Samuel 9:8)*

This is not entitlement. He knows this is not owed to him.

Grace should produce humble wonder. Why would God show mercy to us? Why would Christ give Himself for us? Why would the King make room at His table for people like us?

The answer is not, "Because we deserve it after all."

The answer is, "Because God is more good than we can imagine."

Grace Restores and Seats Us at the Table

2 Samuel 9:9-13

David does not merely let Mephibosheth live.

That would have been mercy enough.

David does not merely give him one meal.

That would have been generosity.

David says:

> *"I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father, and you shall eat at my table always." (2 Samuel 9:7)*

Saul's land is restored. Ziba and his household are commanded to work the land. Mephibosheth will be provided for.

But the repeated emphasis is the table.

Verse 10:

"Mephibosheth your master's grandson shall always eat at my table."

Verse 11:

"So Mephibosheth ate at David's table, like one of the king's sons."

Verse 13:

"So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he ate always at the king's table."

The table means belonging.

Mephibosheth is not treated like a tolerated enemy, a charity case, or someone kept at a safe distance. He is seated like one of the king's sons.

The story ends with an important sentence:

"Now he was lame in both his feet." (2 Samuel 9:13)

David's kindness does not erase every earthly weakness in Mephibosheth's life.

He is still lame in both his feet.

But he is also seated at the king's table.

Both are true.

That is deeply encouraging. The grace of God does not mean every sorrow, weakness, limitation, or struggle disappears instantly in this life.

Some wounds still ache. Some bodies still hurt. Some families are still complicated. Some temptations still require daily war.

Grace does not always erase every visible weakness now.

But grace gives us a new standing.

It gives us a new household.

It gives us a place at the King's table.

Through Jesus, we are not merely forgiven at a distance. We are brought near.

Ephesians 2 says that we were once far off, but in Christ Jesus we have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

John 1 says that those who receive Jesus are given the right to become children of God.

Revelation points us forward to the marriage supper of the Lamb, when God's people will feast in the presence of their King forever.

Path to Christ

2 Samuel 9 points us to Christ through covenant kindness, royal initiative, restoration, and table fellowship.

Mephibosheth receives mercy because of another. David shows kindness for Jonathan's sake.

In the gospel, sinners are welcomed by God because of another: Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the greater Son of David. He seeks the lost, welcomes the unworthy, restores what sin has ruined, and brings His people to the table as sons and daughters.

The cross tells us our sin is serious. Serious enough that the Son of God gave His life for sinners.

But the cross also tells us God's mercy is deeper than our sin.

Jesus was treated as the outsider so we could be brought in.

Jesus was rejected so we could be welcomed.

Jesus bore judgment so the King could say to us, "Do not fear."

Jesus rose from the dead so the invitation would be secure forever.

Application and Conclusion

We are all invited to the King's table, not because we deserve to be there, but because God, our ultimate King, is more good than we can imagine.

First, receive the King's mercy.

Stop trying to earn the seat. Stop hiding, convinced grace is for other people. Stop assuming God is less merciful than He has revealed Himself to be in Christ.

Come to Jesus empty-handed.

Faith is not bringing payment. Faith is receiving mercy.

Second, reflect the King's kindness.

If God has made room for us at His table, then we become people who make room for others.

We cannot fix everything. A meal cannot solve every problem. A conversation cannot heal every wound.

But it can say something true:

You are seen.

There is room here.

Our fellowship meals matter. Our welcome matters. The way we speak to newcomers matters. The way we honour people who cannot repay us matters.

Not because kindness saves us.

But because saved people learn the family resemblance of the King who welcomed them.

Discussion Guide Questions

1. What stood out to you from the story of the King's Table dinner in Orange County?
2. Why can a table communicate more than food?
3. Why would Mephibosheth have reason to fear being summoned by David?
4. What is surprising about David's question in 2 Samuel 9:1?
5. Why is it important that grace begins with the king's initiative?
6. How do we sometimes assume God is waiting for us to make ourselves acceptable?
7. What does David mean by showing kindness "for Jonathan's sake"?
8. How does kindness for another's sake point us to Jesus?
9. Why are the words "Do not fear" so important in this passage?
10. What does it mean that Mephibosheth eats at David's table like one of the king's sons?
11. Why does the final note about Mephibosheth's feet matter pastorally?
12. How can our church reflect the King's kindness in practical ways this week?