HUDSON'S HOPE CHAPEL

The Spear in the Room

September 27, 2026 · Series: After God's Own Heart · Luke Hughes-Bunger

Main Passage: 1 Samuel 18:6-16 (ESV)

Big Idea: God's presence frees His people to celebrate another person's good and remain faithful under hostility. Our security rests in Jesus, the King who saves His enemies.

Introduction - When Someone Else Becomes a Threat

In the fairy tale Snow White, the queen cannot bear the mirror's news that someone else is more beautiful. She still has beauty and position. Yet another person's good becomes a threat. Her desire to remain first leads her to order harm against an innocent girl.

The story exposes something we can recognize in ordinary life. Someone receives praise, shares good news, or is given a responsibility we wanted. We begin comparing. Nothing has necessarily been taken from us, but we feel that we have lost something.

Real disappointment may lie beneath that response. Yet resentment can turn another person's happiness into something we want to diminish. Our attention becomes fixed on where we rank rather than on what God has given.

This week's passage follows David's victory over Goliath. God has delivered Israel through His chosen servant. The people celebrate together, but Saul hears their celebration as a threat to his place. David's story now moves from public victory into hostility within the king's household.

A Song Saul Cannot Enjoy

1 Samuel 18:6-9; Romans 12:15

The women come out to meet King Saul with music and dancing. Their song honours both Saul and David. Saul receives praise for his thousands, but David receives praise for his ten thousands. Saul focuses on the difference.

He immediately asks what more David can have except the kingdom. The song concerns victory, but Saul hears a threat to his authority. He begins watching David with suspicion.

Earlier, God has told Saul that his kingdom will not continue because he has rejected God's word. His fear belongs to that larger story. Yet David has not taken the throne. He has served Saul and helped rescue Israel. Saul resents the person through whom God has brought blessing.

Two weeks ago, the series showed that God sees beyond outward appearance and knows the heart. Saul's gaze is different. Fear shapes what he notices. David's continued success will deepen his suspicion rather than bring him joy.

Learning to Celebrate

Whose good news is difficult for us to hear? We may celebrate most people easily while struggling with one particular person. Their recognition touches a disappointment or desire we have carried for years.

We can name that honestly before God. We can confess envy without pretending that our hurt is unreal. Asking for forgiveness also means asking God to help us love the person whose success troubles us.

A practical response gives shape to that prayer. Thank the person for their work. Give them credit without adding a criticism. Speak well of them when they are absent. These small actions help us resist resentment rather than feed it.

Romans 12:15 calls Christians to rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. Both require attention to another person's life. We may find it easier to help someone in sorrow than to celebrate someone who seems to need nothing from us.

In church life, another person's gifts benefit the whole fellowship. When someone welcomes a visitor or offers care we cannot provide, we can thank God. We do not need to be indispensable for our service to matter.

Jesus has welcomed His people by grace. We do not earn His love by being more useful than everyone else. That security frees us to serve alongside people whose abilities exceed our own.

The Spear in the Room

1 Samuel 18:10-11; 19:8-10

David plays the lyre as part of his regular service to Saul. Earlier, this music has brought Saul relief. Now Saul holds a spear and tries to pin David to the wall. David avoids him twice.

The passage describes a harmful spirit from God coming upon Saul. This belongs to the judgment following Saul's rejection of God's word. God's authority still governs the story, even in this frightening scene.

That does not excuse Saul's violence. The text states his intention to kill David. Saul remains responsible for his wicked action. Nor does the passage provide a modern diagnosis or teach us to associate mental illness with evil or violence.

David's faithful service does not make the room safe. His patience, skill, and care cannot force Saul to treat him well. Responsibility for the attack belongs to the attacker.

Faithfulness and Safety

This matters for people who have been harmed by someone they tried to help. We can start believing that better words or greater patience would have prevented the wrong. David's experience challenges that burden. Doing good does not give us control over another person's choices.

Refusing revenge does not require remaining available to someone who threatens us. David escapes here, and in chapter 19 he flees after another attack. Seeking safety, telling the truth, and asking for protection can be faithful responses.

The church should help people find safety. Forgiveness must never become a reason to protect a harmful person's access to someone they have hurt. A call to patience must not silence truthful requests for help.

At the same time, correction and disagreement are not automatically persecution. A person can question our work or challenge a decision without attacking us. We need humility to hear legitimate concerns and courage to recognize actual harm.

Those with responsibility should examine how they respond when threatened. Do we punish disagreement? Do we use anger, silence, or religious language to pressure people? Our fear may explain a temptation, but it cannot justify controlling behaviour.

Repentance means acknowledging the harm, stopping it, and receiving help and accountability. An apology does not entitle us to immediate trust. God's grace leads us toward truth and change because the people affected by our actions matter to Him.

The Lord Was with Him

1 Samuel 18:12-16; Hebrews 13:5

Saul removes David from his presence and makes him a commander of a thousand. David continues leading the people and succeeds in his responsibilities. Israel and Judah love him, while Saul's fear increases.

The repeated explanation is that the Lord is with David. Saul can send him away from the palace, but cannot cancel God's purpose for His chosen king. David's future rests in God's hands.

David does not use the people's affection to seize the throne in this passage. He carries the responsibility he has today. God is preparing His future king through service before he receives the crown.

We are not told everything David feels. The account directs our attention to his conduct and to God's presence. Hostility does not make faithful service worthless.

Serving without Controlling the Verdict

When someone thinks badly of us, we may rehearse the same conversation repeatedly. There may be something to clarify or a wrong we need to put right. But another person's approval cannot become the condition for everything we do next.

We can keep promises, speak truthfully, and seek wise help. We can resist exaggerating another person's faults to gain sympathy. Trusting God allows us to act responsibly without trying to control everyone's opinion.

For example, a colleague may take credit for our work. We can ask for fairness and address what happened. We can also continue doing our work well rather than letting it fail to damage

their reputation. Their wrong does not have to determine our next choice.

David's success is not a guarantee that every faithful Christian will receive promotion or public approval. God is preserving the king through whom His purpose advances. David still faces years of danger and uncertainty.

Our assurance comes through Jesus. Those who trust Him are brought into fellowship with God. Hebrews 13:5 gives believers the promise, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

God's withdrawal of His Spirit's empowering presence from Saul as king is serious judgment. It does not mean Jesus abandons His people whenever they struggle. Christians can bring their wounds and sins to a faithful Saviour and ask for strength to obey.

The King Who Saves His Enemies

Mark 15:10; 1 Peter 2:23-24

David's experience points toward the rejected King who comes after him. Jesus, the promised Son of David, heals, teaches, and welcomes sinners. His goodness meets hostility from leaders who want to preserve their place.

Mark records that Pilate recognizes the chief priests' envy when they hand Jesus over. Once again, someone else's goodness is treated as a threat. Yet Jesus remains faithful throughout His suffering.

David can only point toward this greater King. His later misuse of power shows that he also needs forgiveness. Jesus alone obeys without sin and saves those who cannot rescue themselves.

First Peter explains that Jesus does not answer insults with insults or suffering with threats. He entrusts Himself to the Father who judges justly. His response shows us a faithful way to face hostility.

But Peter also announces what Jesus accomplishes for us. He bears our sins in His body on the cross. He takes the judgment guilty people deserve, including those whose envy has harmed others. He gives His life to reconcile enemies to God and rises as the living King.

Receiving Grace and Responding

If we recognize something of Saul's resentment in ourselves, we can bring it honestly to Jesus. We confess without blaming the person we envy. We trust Christ for forgiveness and for power to begin changing. His grace leads us to love the people we have treated as rivals.

Those who belong to Jesus already have the Father's welcome. Someone else's praise cannot reduce it. Another person's gifts cannot make us less His children. God's generosity toward them gives us reason to rejoice because we have received His generosity too.

Those wounded by hostility also have hope in this King. He sees truly and judges justly. We can seek protection and justice without making revenge the purpose of our lives. His resurrection assures us that evil will not finally prevail.

This week, thank God for one person's good news, take one honest step away from resentment, or ask for help with a difficult situation. Look to the King who holds your life. His grace gives room to celebrate, courage to remain faithful, and hope to begin again.

Discussion Guide Questions

1. How does the queen's response in Snow White help us recognize the danger of comparison?
2. Read 1 Samuel 18:6-9. What does Saul notice in the song, and what does he overlook?
3. How does Saul's response to David reveal his resistance to God's word?
4. Why can rejoicing with someone be difficult? What concrete action could help us practise Romans 12:15?
5. Read verses 10-11. What does David's experience show about the limits of our ability to make others treat us well?
6. How do David's escapes here and in 19:10 help distinguish refusing revenge from remaining in danger?
7. How can a church support safety and accountability while teaching forgiveness?
8. Read verses 12-16. What explains David's success? Why should we avoid turning this into a promise of promotion for every believer?
9. What might faithful service look like when someone's opinion of us does not change?
10. Read Mark 15:10 and 1 Peter 2:23-24. How does Jesus fulfil the pattern David previews, and what does He accomplish beyond giving us an example?
11. How does the Father's welcome through Jesus address our need to compete for recognition?
12. What is one response you can make this week: celebrate another's good, confess resentment, serve faithfully, or seek help?