HUDSON'S HOPE CHAPEL

A Shepherd for God's People

October 25, 2026 · Series: After God's Own Heart · Luke Hughes-Bunger

Main Passage: 2 Samuel 5:1-12 (ESV)

Big Idea: God entrusts strength for others' good, and Jesus is the Good Shepherd whose care we can receive and share.

Introduction - Strength Turned Toward Care

When Captain Arthur Rostron learns that the Titanic needs help, he immediately turns the Carpathia toward her. While the ship travels, he prepares to receive people in distress. Doctors have assigned places. Blankets and refreshments are made ready. Even the captain's cabin is made available to survivors.

The Carpathia cannot prevent the sinking, but she does reach the lifeboats and bring survivors aboard. The rescue shows authority put to practical use. A captain directs the ship's strength and resources toward people who need care. His decisions make a difference to those who receive help.

This raises a question for us: who benefits from the influence we have? Our choices affect children, colleagues, neighbours, and people in our church. We may have more ability to help or hurt someone than we realize. We can begin by noticing what life is like for the people affected by our decisions.

David faces this question on a much larger scale. After years of living under Saul's threats, he receives authority over all Israel. God gives him a people to shepherd. His kingship points toward Jesus, who uses His authority perfectly for His people's good.

Point 1 - A Promise Received, a People Gathered

2 Samuel 5:1-5

A long and painful history stands behind the gathering at Hebron. Saul and Jonathan have died in battle, and David has mourned them. David becomes king over Judah, while the rest of Israel follows Saul's son Ish-bosheth. The conflict between the two houses brings further loss and violence.

By the time all the tribes come to David, he has ruled Judah for seven and a half years. We should not picture a quick move from hiding in a cave to ruling a united nation. God's promise has sustained David through a long period of waiting.

The tribes give several reasons for receiving him. He is one of their own people. He has already led them in battle. Most importantly, the Lord has appointed him to shepherd Israel. God's word gives this gathering its deepest meaning.

David then makes a covenant with the elders before the Lord. A covenant is a solemn commitment. The king accepts responsibilities in God's presence. His appointment does not place him beyond God's authority or give him permission to treat people however he chooses.

This is a hopeful moment. After division, the tribes gather under the king God has chosen. The years of trouble have not made God's promise powerless. He continues His work through a history that includes real pain and loss.

We also know how waiting can wear down hope. A prayer remains unanswered. A situation becomes harder. We may begin to wonder whether God's promises really belong to us. This passage calls us to remember His faithfulness while paying attention to what He has actually promised.

David has a specific promise about becoming king. We cannot turn that into a promise that every patient person will receive a promotion, a spouse, or public recognition. Those may be good desires, and we can pray about them honestly. They are not guaranteed outcomes for every believer.

In Christ, God promises forgiveness, His presence, resurrection, and life in His kingdom. These gifts remain secure when other parts of our future are uncertain. We can tell God what we want while allowing His sure promises to guide our hope.

David's kingdom offers Israel a real measure of unity, but it cannot remove every danger or heal every division. We need the greater Son of David, Jesus, to gather and keep His people forever. Our lasting confidence rests in Him.

Point 2 - The People Belong to God

2 Samuel 5:2-3; 1 Peter 5:1-4

God calls David a shepherd. The word recalls his earlier life caring for sheep. Now his responsibility is much larger, but the calling still centres on care. People need protection, guidance, and provision. A ruler's reputation alone cannot meet those needs.

God also calls Israel “my people.” Before these words challenge David, they reassure the people. Through conflict, grief, and division, they remain people whom God cares about. David must serve them because they already matter to the Lord.

That is good news for anyone who hears every sermon as another task to complete. God sees more than the work you can do. If you are tired, dependent on help, or unable to contribute as you once did, your need does not make you unimportant to Him.

David's responsibility will affect people's homes, safety, work, and families. Yet they never become his possessions. He must answer to the God who entrusts them to his care. Authority brings responsibility rather than ownership of another person's life.

We can apply this wherever our choices affect someone else. A parent's correction should seek a child's growth and safety. It should not become an outlet for the parent's frustration. Firm boundaries and patient care can belong together.

At work, someone with experience can make it easier for a newer colleague to ask questions. A supervisor can acknowledge a mistake, give credit honestly, and hear concerns without punishing the person who raises them. These choices show whether influence is serving others.

In church, people deserve welcome before they become useful to a programme or ministry. Someone who cannot volunteer or give much money still belongs among the people we should love. Our interest in them must extend beyond what they can contribute.

This applies especially to church leaders. In 1 Peter 5, elders are told to care for God's flock willingly, without domineering over those entrusted to them. They lead by example under Christ, the chief Shepherd. A pastor's work should help people know Jesus and follow His word.

A leadership position never grants permission to harm people or control their consciences. Honest questions and proper accountability belong within faithful care. Someone who has been hurt should not be silenced in the name of protecting a leader's authority.

Many acts of care require no official position. We can welcome someone at a fellowship meal, learn their name, or listen without turning the conversation toward ourselves. We can notice someone who has become quiet and ask how they are doing.

The aim is not to take responsibility for every need. It is to pay attention to the people within our reach. Ask God to show you where your time, words, or practical help could serve someone this week.

Point 3 - Greatness for the Sake of Others

2 Samuel 5:6-12; Ezekiel 34; John 10:11, 28; Ephesians 2

David captures Jerusalem and makes it his city. The account includes the defenders' taunt about the blind and lame and David's own harsh words. These difficult words must not become an excuse for contempt toward people with disabilities. David remains an imperfect king; later he will welcome Jonathan's disabled son, Mephibosheth, to his table.

As David builds and grows stronger, verse 10 explains the source of his success: the Lord is with him. David acts and works, but his position cannot finally be explained by his own ability. He receives strength from God.

Hiram, king of Tyre, sends materials and craftsmen to build David a house. The former fugitive now has a royal home. Verse 12 explains how David understands this change. God has established him and exalted his kingdom for the sake of Israel.

David recognizes both where his authority comes from and what it is for. Those two truths belong together. Remembering the Giver leads to gratitude. Remembering the purpose leads to care for the people affected by the gift.

Success can make us forget both. We may begin to believe that everything depends on us and that other people's needs are interruptions. We may become impatient with the very people we are meant to serve. Growing influence makes humility and honest correction more necessary.

Later, David will misuse his power terribly. Today's understanding does not make him incapable of tomorrow's sin. His failure also shows why we need more than a skilled or gifted human ruler. We need a Shepherd whose goodness never fails.

Ezekiel 34 describes leaders who feed themselves while neglecting God's flock. God promises to seek His sheep and place His servant David over them. Since Ezekiel speaks after David's death, the promise looks forward to the coming King from David's line.

Jesus identifies Himself as the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep (John 10:11). He knows His people's weakness and does not abandon them when their rescue becomes costly. He gives Himself for them at the cross.

We need His saving work because we have sinned too. We have ignored needs, used others, and resisted God. Jesus bears the judgment our sins deserve. He rises from the dead and gives lasting life to those who trust Him. His sheep are secure in His care (John 10:28).

We receive this mercy through faith. We do not earn our place by becoming useful enough. We can confess our sin and come to Him with nothing to offer except our need. His grace is sufficient for weak and guilty people.

His cross also brings people together. Ephesians 2 describes Jews and Gentiles becoming one body and members of God's household. Our shared welcome in Jesus gives us reason to welcome one another across differences of background, experience, and personality.

Application and Conclusion - Entrusted to His Care, Freed to Care

Receive Christ's care. Bring Him the need you are tempted to hide, whether that is guilt, weariness, fear, or uncertainty. If you have not trusted Him, turn to Him for forgiveness and life. His death and resurrection give you a sure foundation for hope.

Choose one person affected by your influence and consider what would serve their good. Listen before defending yourself. Give the apology you owe. Make time for a conversation or offer help you can reliably provide. Let care become a particular action.

Entrust to Jesus what lies beyond your reach. You cannot control another person's choices or carry every burden alone. Faithful service includes prayer, wise limits, and dependence on the Shepherd whose care exceeds your own.

David receives a crown for the sake of God's people. Jesus gives His own life for His people and keeps them forever. Secure in His care, we can become more willing to share our time, attention, and strength with others.

Discussion Guide Questions

1. What stands out to you about the Carpathia's preparations to receive survivors? What makes care practical?
2. Read 2 Samuel 5:1-3. What reasons do the tribes give for receiving David as king?
3. Why does David's covenant before the Lord matter? What does it tell us about his authority?

4. How can we distinguish God's promises in Christ from good outcomes we hope for but have not been promised?
5. What comfort do God's words “my people” offer someone who feels weary or unable to contribute?
6. Where do your words or decisions affect another person? How could you better serve that person's good?
7. How does 1 Peter 5:1-4 help us understand leadership and accountability in the church?
8. Compare 2 Samuel 5:10 and 12. What do these verses teach about the source and purpose of David's strength?
9. How do Jesus' death and resurrection answer needs that David's kingship cannot meet?
10. What responsibility do you need to entrust to Christ this week? What concrete act of care remains within your reach?