

A shepherd, a player of the lute—talented with song and verse—and he was handsome. But aside from these characteristics, there was little that set him apart from his peers in Palestine except, that is, for his faith in the God of Abraham. It was a great faith, a faith that led him to volunteer to fight the herculean giant, Goliath, though he was too small to even fit into his father's armor.

I speak of David, the one who would become the king of Israel and the author of the Psalms. Tonight, we're going to consider the Christmas faith of this Old Testament saint, and how this faith might encourage our own in our walk with God and with one another.

OPENING PRAYER

ACTS 2:23-28: St. Peter preached, "(Jesus) you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. ²⁴ But God raised Him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. ²⁵ For David said concerning Him, 'I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; ²⁶ therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. ²⁷ For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption. ²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.'"

Again, David said, **"For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption" (Acts 2:27).** David was prophesying about the resurrection of the Christ, who is the **"Holy One,"** the one who would sit on his throne forever.

With this prophesy hanging in his mind, David was filled with such confidence and courage, he was able to say, **"I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken" (Acts 2:25).**

And his heart was transformed. He proclaimed, **"therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope" (Acts 2:26).**

Perhaps you remember the story: When David brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem, the Scripture reads that he **“danced before the LORD with all his might... (and) brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the horn” (2 Samuel 6:14-15).**

David’s joy in the Lord was so full there was no room for fear. And he’s the miracle: David’s happiness for his relationship with God translated into fearlessness. No shadow could invade the light in which he walked. That’s how big David’s God was.

David professed, **“You will not abandon my soul to Hades”(Acts 2:27).** What will we be afraid of if even death is no longer a threat? For even in death, there is life in the Spirit of God, and the promise of the resurrection of the body. This was what lay at the heart of David’s Christmas-faith. He believed in the resurrection and he was inspired by it to do God’s will, to repent when he didn’t, and to rejoice always!

David said, **“You have made known to me the paths of life; You will make me full of gladness with Your presence” (Acts 2:28).** David’s hope was for today, that is, wherever he was, wherever he would go, he rested in the confidence that **“the paths of life”** which the Lord had revealed to him, the paths of faith and prayer which lead him to repentance and forgiveness, would bring him into the very presence of God himself. This was the source of David’s joy and “gladness,” the source of his love for his Savior.

What I want us to take away from our time together tonight is this, that David’s Christmas-faith was rooted in the revelation of God’s love. His faith in the Savior was built on God’s work through Abraham and Moses and on his own experience in the Lord. For David himself, his faith became tangible through his music and the Psalms.

David was so completely enamored with God that the Lord himself said of him that he was **“a man after my heart.”**

To be a man, a woman, after God’s own heart, this is a faith that confesses sin and receives absolution with thankfulness.

To be a man, a woman, after God's own heart, this is a faith that believes the Lord hears our voices and answers our prayers.

To be a man, a woman, after God's own heart, this is a faith that believes the Lord will direct our way in love with compassion.

To be a man, a woman, after God's own heart, this is a faith that believes the Lord's heart is very big, that it is filled with enough hope and joy for everyone.

This heart, God's heart, is a good heart to be after, to have, to possess as our own. It is better than the heart of the world, which is no heart at all. It is the best heart of all, for therein is the fullness of God.

As we approach Christmas let us meditate on the Christmas-faith of the Old Testament saints, of Abraham who showed us what it meant to believe that the Lord will provide, of Moses who showed us what it means to look to the reward, and of David, who revealed what it means to strive after God's own heart.

St. Paul wrote, **2 Thessalonians 3:5: "May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ."**

This week let us meditate on the power and richness of God's heart for us in his Son, Jesus.

This week let us find ways to express our hearts for God in ways that are meaningful and unique for us, just as David did.

And this week may you have the opportunity to share this good news with another person who really needs to hear it, in the name of Jesus. Amen.