

## How to be Great in the Eyes of God

When I think of someone ‘great in the eyes of God, I think of David. 1 Chronicles 11:9 says that David was great, and that God was with him. David was great in the eyes of God. He was also great in the eyes of Israel (they even made songs about him). As we say today, ‘he was the man’!

**‘You are the man’** are actual words found in 2 Samuel 12:7. Nathan the prophet, said these words to David at the lowest point of his life. David had hit rock bottom and was living through the lowest, most disappointing season of his life.

“*You’re the man*” sounds like a great thing to say to someone who is in a tight spot. However, in this instance, it was not a statement of affirmation or confirmation from the prophet to king David. We all know the importance of affirmation, of course. However, in this situation, Nathan is simply saying to David: *you are the man who brought this on yourself. You can’t blame anyone else but yourself for the mess you are in.*

Do you remember the episode in David’s life when he committed adultery with Bathsheba and how David basically sent her husband Uriah to his death? Well, that is the context of this statement.

Nathan, the prophet, came to David and told him a story to confront him about what he had done and, at the end, he said, *the bad guy in the story is you. You are the man.*

**2 Samuel 12:7-8** - *Then Nathan said to David, “**You are the man!** Thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. <sup>8</sup>I gave you your master’s house and your master’s wives into your keeping and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more!’*

This was not a statement to affirm or confirm David, but to confront and to correct.

### 1. We love affirmation but often despise correction.

We love it when we hear, *you are anointed, you are the best, you’re the man, you can do it!*

However, there are times when **correction is exactly what we need** and we need to welcome it as much as we would welcome praise or affirmation. Correction can be a tremendously constructive force in our lives. There are incredible benefits in welcoming correction.

- **Proverbs 12:1** - *Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid.*
- **Proverbs 15:32 ESV** - *Whoever ignores instruction despises himself but he who listens to reproof gains intelligence.*

- **Proverbs 15:5** - *A fool despises his father's instruction, but he who receives correction is prudent.*
- **Proverbs 29:1 NCV** - *Whoever is stubborn after being corrected many times will suddenly be hurt beyond cure.*
- **Hebrews 12:11** - *Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

**Hebrews 12:6-11 The Message** - ... *"have you forgotten how good parents treat children, and that God regards you as his children? My dear child, don't shrug off God's discipline, but don't be crushed by it either. It's the child he loves that he disciplines; the child he embraces, he also **corrects**. God is educating you; that's why you must never drop out. He's treating you as dear children. This trouble you're in isn't punishment; it's training, the normal experience of children. Only irresponsible parents leave children to fend for themselves. Would you prefer an irresponsible God? We respect our own parents for training and not spoiling us, so why not embrace God's training so we can truly live? While we were children, our parents did what seemed best to them. But God is doing what is best for us, training us to live God's holy best. At the time, discipline isn't much fun. It always feels like it's going against the grain. **Later, of course, it pays off big-time**, for it's the well-trained who find themselves mature in their relationship with God."*

Correction can save your life.

## **2. The fruit of correction is promotion just like the fruit of humility is elevation.**

We will never be great in the eyes of God without the acceptance of correction and treading the path of humility.

**James 4:10** - *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.*

David's most humiliating moments in his life are on display in 2 Samuel 11 and 12. We can hardly believe that someone like David would descend into such depths of moral corruption. However, when confronted by the prophet, he acknowledged his error. He didn't say, *'the devil made me do it'*. Because David welcomed the Lord's rebuke and repented, he was able to be restored by the Lord. He ended his career well, and the Lord elevated him again. As he was dying, these were his last words:

**2 Samuel 23:1** - *Now these are the last words of David. Thus says David the son of Jesse; thus says the man raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel*

- a) The man raised up on high** - at the end of his life, David was indeed **"the man"** – no longer the man who descended into the lowest of lowest but the man who was elevated, raised up, promoted by God. The fruit of correction is promotion.

**1 Chronicles 11:9** - *So David went on and became great, and the Lord of hosts was with him*

How do you become great in the eyes of God? – listening to God’s voice and accepting correction is certainly a big part of it.

**Habakkuk 2:1** - *I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart, and watch to see what He will say to me, and what I will answer when I am corrected.*

What will you answer? Will you say, the devil made me do it, will you blame someone else?

**b)** David was *the man exalted by the Most High*. The Hebrew word for “Man” in most verses of the O.T. is **ish**. But here, the Hebrew word used was **geber**.

*Geber* literally means “to be mighty” – to be a hero, someone who distinguishes himself from others by his strength or courage, or uprightness, or some other quality”.

**c)** As David is about to die, he told His son Solomon:

**1 Kings 2:1-2** - *Now the days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying: <sup>2</sup> “I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and **prove yourself a man.** [geber]*

He basically said, *be “the man” for your generation* – a strong man, a courageous man, a hero.

### **3. Becoming ‘the man’**

There’s One that we are called to imitate, One that never failed. Pilate stood as His judge and found no fault in Him. There’s only One who truly is “THE MAN”: Jesus!

**John 19:5** - *Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, “**Behold the Man!**”*

No one can teach us how to be great in the eyes of God like Jesus. No one was more humble, no one modelled obedience and a life that pleases God like Jesus. As great as David was and as inspiring his story of recovery is, it still can’t match the story of the One the Father said, *‘this is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased’*. Jesus is the Man!