

Build on Great David's Greater Son

☆ **Raising up the lowly (vv.8-11)**

☆ **Living in His eternal love (vv.11-16)**

In the name of Jesus, great David's greater Son, dear children of the heavenly Father:

It's no secret. We call this a "worship service." But who is serving whom? That's really the question for our lives as well. We want to live for the glory of God whether we eat or drink or whatever we do. But as we seek to build our lives and get established as students or workers or families or retirees, we constantly bump up against this question: Who is serving whom? In fact, we sometimes find ourselves trying so hard we can't sleep at night. In one of those piercing comments from the Psalms, the Holy Spirit reminds us: *"Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat – for he grants sleep to those he loves."* (Psalm 127:1f NIV)

As we pray for Jesus to build a royal highway to our hearts this Advent season, we ask Him to fill in the valleys of our depression and level the mountains of our pride. Pride in personal accomplishment is every bit as dangerous as worry about the lack of it. So God gives us a pre-Christmas gift as Christ comes again. The dear Holy Spirit counsels us to **Build on Great David's Greater Son**. We see God...

☆ **Raising up the lowly (vv.8-11)**

What for us were high school and college years were tough as nails for David the son of Jesse. Maybe it wasn't so bad in his early teens tending his father's sheep near Bethlehem. But David had to kill a lion and a bear to protect his father's flock. Killing the Philistine giant Goliath made David a national hero, so you might expect everything went smoothly for David into his twenties. After all, he was the LORD's anointed to be the next king after Saul. Trouble was, Saul wanted David dead and hunted him for years to the borders of Israel. David spent most of his early adulthood running for his life.

But now all that was behind him. Saul was dead along with every threat from his family. The Philistines were whipped into shape after several decisive victories. Peace had finally come, so that David could focus on worshiping the LORD the way he had wanted to while running from Saul. After a problem moving the ark of the covenant on a cart, David remembered the Levites were to carry it. Now with that symbol of God's presence in Jerusalem, David had something he wanted to do for God. So He went to his pastor, the prophet Nathan with an idea: *"Here I am, living in a palace of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent."* Nathan approved right away: *"Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the Lord is with you."* (2 Samuel 7:2f NIV)

Have you ever had someone tell you that? It feels pretty good. Years ago I was asking some of our members about some ministry plans, and they replied, "Go ahead. God is blessing your work." When you are enjoying special blessings from God, you thank Him with all your heart. Everything seems to be going well, but suddenly it feels as if all the tires fell right off your car. What felt like high mountain scenery suddenly seems like an avalanche dumping on your plans. We all know the pain.

Likely David would have felt that way when Nathan came back with the LORD's correction to his plans. King David was not the one to build the LORD's temple. Sometimes you and I are not allowed to do the good things we wanted for God. He may have another plan in mind. But first He reminds us where we're coming from and how far He's brought us **Raising up the lowly**. God gave Nathan a DVD of David's life so far: *"Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people Israel. I have been with*

you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you.” God always wants to remind us, *’Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home.* (CW 379:3) Furthermore, the LORD had better plans than David could have conceived: *“Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men of the earth. And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies.”*

Don’t we have to admit that sometimes our discontent comes from shortsighted vision? God has better plans for us than we think. Imagine Mary hearing she was going to be pregnant as an unmarried virgin. Think of Joseph when he found out. Can you look back on times when you have wanted something so bad, only to find out later that God was really good to not give you whatever you thought was so important? This is why I’m so glad **Great David’s Greater Son** came to be my Savior. Jesus is so patient and kind that we can go to Him with our heart griefs even when we know we should not feel that way. He loves **Raising up the lowly**. *“Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall.”* (Psalm 55:22 NIV) Then you can **Build on Great David’s Greater Son...**

✧ **Living in His eternal love (vv.11-16)**

David had plans for God. But God had better plans for David. *“The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”* Instead of David building God’s house, God would build David’s.

If you put these words next to what the angel Gabriel said to the virgin Mary in Luke 1:26-38, the similarity is absolutely amazing. Gabriel said of Mary’s Son whom she was to give the name Jesus: *“He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.”* (Luke 1:32f NIV) Now David’s greatest Descendant is called *“The Son of the Most High”* to whom *“the Lord God”* would give David’s throne, not for a lifetime, but *“forever.”*

Are we reaching here? Does this actually apply to Jesus? The LORD through Nathan said to David about his **Greater Son**: *“I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”* Jesus had no sins of His own as proven by two Jewish and two Gentile courts complete with false witnesses that still could not get Jesus convicted. Yet Jesus was the most sinful Man who ever lived because according to another prophet named Isaiah: *“The LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”* (Isaiah 53:6) Jesus would be punished under the justice of sinful mortals for all the sins we mortals committed against God. Such were God’s plans for us to always be **Living under His eternal love**.

Here in God’s *“unfailing love”* we find our hope to **Build on Great David’s Greater Son**. The *“rod”* of God that punished Jesus in our place, is now the comforting *“rod”* of the Good Shepherd to protect His sheep. So safe are we in Christ’s tender loving care that we can pray with David: *“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”* (Psalm 139:23f) And whatever our needs today, tomorrow or for all eternity, of this we can be sure when we **Build on Great David’s Greater Son**: *“He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?”* (Romans 8:32 NIV) Aren’t you glad you can let God guide and direct your life. This Advent may we say with lips and lives like mother Mary and King David: *“The will of God is always best.”* And with the Lord of our lives: *“Thy will be done.”* Amen.

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New Life Evangelical Lutheran Church
180 County Rd F - Shoreview, MN 55126