Sunday 12th September 2021

1 Samuel 18: 1-5

Romans 8: 1-14

Relationships

The 1 Samuel scripture is just after David had defeated Goliath on the battlefield. David is speaking with Saul, the king, about himself and his family. Simple shepherd boy!

Jonathan was Saul’s eldest son. Overhears conversation and deeply moved. Made an impression without even addressing him directly.

Loved David as himself. Command given by God, love your neighbour as yourself. So, what worth do we put on ourselves? Is it driven by status? Achievements? What people think of us? Do we love ourselves as children of God – living in His affection?

Jonathan had deep love for David – became one in Spirit. Spiritual connection stronger than anything earthly. Where it says that Saul did not let David return to his father’s house is basically adopting him into the family.

Earthly emotions? Jealousy, rejection and begrudging. Could be kinder thoughts – sympathy?

Spiritual connection reflects pure love – to the point of covenant being made. No details of agreement – not a political treaty – mutual promise of loyalty and friendship.

Accepted as an equal – took off robe – giving of himself. Vulnerability accepted – sword and belt. Acknowledges him as successor to throne.

Could we imagine Prince Charles giving his robe and succession to throne to a shepherd? Not even valued very much by his own family.

Jonathan adopted him into his family as a brother, as a co-heir.

How do we relate to people around us? Do we have a deep love for anyone? For those united in marriage we would say yes. Given ourselves to each other.

We see in the passage again the affections being reciprocated. What would onlookers have thought about David? Money grabbing, manipulative?

What about Jonathan? Easily led? Soft target? Only after the covenant was made did David prove himself to others as being worthy.

These are the relationships that God desires for all His people. He gave His law to accomplish that fairness and justice for all. We have seen in kings how far removed the people became from God, but also from each other. Bribery, deceit, murder.

This is what Paul is saying in his letter to the Romans. Old bondage of legalities now thrown off. If failed, strived even harder to make things right.

Holy Spirit introduces believers into new relationship as free-born children of God.

No longer just referred to as “God”, but Jesus uses “Father”. Image moved from remote lawgiver and judge to intimate atmosphere of family.

Jesus was also filled with the Holy Spirit – at His baptism.

We have indwelling of same Spirit. Like Jonathan giving his robe – his very self to David – despite his background, because they were joined as one by the Spirit. Exactly the same for Jesus for us. He gave His very self – as we are equally children of God.

Jesus has unique claim as “Son of God” and heir to whole kingdom. But what does that mean? Unlike earthly royal families, there is not going to be a death before the kingdom will be inherited.

Kingdom is the community that God desires for all His people – right now. A relationship with each of us.

Jesus as a human was sinless, has every right to be alone with God in paradise, with the Holy Spirit. But that is not His desire, He is willing to share that wonderful relationship that He has, with everyone of us. With all who love Him – who will enter into the covenant that was made in His death.

Jesus is holding out His robes for anyone who chooses to accept them. How did we say onlookers may have thought of David and Jonathan until David proved his worth?

We do not have to prove anything. Jonathan loved David already, his success did not strengthen that relationship. It was as strong as it could be.

Dedicate our life, our relationship with Jesus, to become who He desires us to be and obedient to His call.

We are not slaves or employees. We are adopted unconditionally – not caged or trapped. We are children!