

Sonoraville Baptist Church
Sunday, August 15, 2010 – 6:00 PM
Rev. Steve Skates

Ordination of David Harding as Deacon
Called of God - 1 Samuel 16:7

Introduction: We are here this evening because this church and one man in particular, David Harding, has heard the call of God upon his life for special service. Although this call is unique to David Harding, it is not unique in history.

Down through the ages, God has chosen and called people for special service. In God's word, we find another David who heard a similar call. The Bible describes this David as a man after God's own heart (1 Sam. 13:14). We first hear about this David as he is tending his father's flock of sheep out in the countryside. But God had something else in mind for this little shepherd boy. God wanted to make him a king, so He called him literally out of the fields of Bethlehem and placed him on the throne of Israel. He became Israel's greatest earthly king. But it didn't end there. We know that from this David's line came the king of kings, Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God.

David was truly a gifted man. Besides being a shepherd, he was a writer, a musician, and a military genius. He commanded respect among his peers. He didn't back down from a fight worth fighting. He was a man who wanted to do the right thing. He loved God, trusted Him and knew how to follow Him, but like every one of us, David was not without his faults. He was a sinner, but was a sinner who was called into God's service.

We can learn a few things from this David's life. We can learn how God can take the ordinary, and accomplish the extraordinary, and how God can use us even when we fail. And, we can discover some important principles related to people who are called into God's service.

This message is called a charge, so tonight, I want to use it to charge our deacon candidate, David Harding to understand his role as one God has chosen for a particular task as deacon. But I also want to use this message to charge us as a church to understand our responsibility in the relationship between the chosen and the called out. Tonight, I want to give you three principles about God's Choosing. First:

1. God Chooses According to His Purpose

God's choice for David as Israel's next King not only included a purpose for David's life, it also included a purpose for the nation of Israel and the world. We read of how God used a man named Samuel in that plan and purpose. Samuel, because of his own calling as one of God's Prophets and his obedience, was very instrumental in God choosing David for this important task. It was God working through Samuel who directed the transfer of Israel's government from Saul to David.

This tells us that the church has a role to play in the choosing of God's servants. The church has been ordained, so to speak, to further God's kingdom in this world. When Jesus left this earth, He left behind an unfinished task. He left that task with His church. The literal meaning of the Greek Word *ekklesia* which is translated "church" is "the called out ones." It is God's church who has received a high calling from God. We must be constantly aware of our high calling as the people of God working for the purpose of God. Part of that purpose involves seeking and recognizing God's hand upon individuals as He chooses them for special service. He uses the church to carry His message through individuals to the world that desperately needs to hear.

Not only does God choose according to His purpose, He chooses according to His grace. Paul said that God "chose us in Him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4 NIV). Just think, David - God chose you before He made the earth, before He made the water and the seas, before He made the grass and the trees, before He scooped out the rivers and formed the mountains. God chose you to be His servant. It is no mistake that He chose you. It is not by coincidence that He chose you. You were on His mind from the foundation of the earth.

When Jesus' disciples asked Him who was going to be the greatest in the kingdom, Jesus reminded them that they had not chosen Him; He had chosen them. It's because of God's grace that we are chosen. There's nothing special about us, but there is everything special about Him.

The Bible declares that God wills that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). He wants everyone to experience salvation. But beyond that, God chooses people for special service. He

chooses those who would hear His voice and respond with “*Here am I, send me.*” That is what we are here to do. We are here to send you out David - to release you, and give you our blessing and support, and our prayers as you serve God through His church. The second principle is this:

2. God’s Choosing Relates to Personal Character

By all outward indications, this David would have been the last one chosen to be Israel’s next King. In fact He was the last one! Probably, if they were choosing up sides to play Palestinian baseball, David would have been the last one picked there too. He would have played the position I played the most, left out! But while others looked at David’s outward appearance, but God was looking in his heart (1 Samuel 16:7). God saw something special in David’s heart that would be useful for His purpose. What did He see in David? He saw a young man who would later write the 23rd Psalm which has been read tonight because it’s one of David’s favorite Scriptures. He saw a shepherd boy whose faithfulness in tending to the sheep would translate to his care for his people as the King. In David, He saw character, integrity, leadership qualities, and a humble obedience that would serve Him well as the King of the people. The song puts it, While others saw just a shepherd boy, God saw a king.

When God looks into our hearts, He is looking for similar qualities. He is not interested in the color of our skin, the shape of our bodies, or even our gender. When He wants to call a person for a special purpose, He looks into the heart. He is able to recognize that spiritual character, that inward sense of purpose and drive, that holy quality of conviction and submissiveness to His will. He is looking to see what kind of heart you have.

Now we know from Bible and Church history that God chooses ordinary people who are able to accomplish extraordinary things in response to His leading and blessing. That was certainly true of David, of all the disciples, of Paul, of Martin Luther, of Lottie Moon, Mother Theresa, and of Billy Graham. And it will be true of you David. Your personal character, your devotion to the Lord, helps determine God’s call and the extent to which you fulfill that call. Finally, the last principle is this:

3. God’s Choosing Gives Permanent Significance

David, I want you to know that this calling God has placed upon you is more than a temporary stop in the road of life. It has permanent significance. Samuel’s anointing of David as King had far-reaching importance. **1 Samuel 16:13 (NIV)** says that “*from that day on, the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power.*” From the human standpoint, David’s anointing may not have seemed like much. Many people probably observed this anointing and said to themselves, “*Big deal! Samuel already anointed Saul years ago, and look how he turned out.*” To them it may have been just another ho-hum experience. But in the Lord’s eyes, the choice of David was going to have a lasting impact on Israel and the world. Because from the lineage of David, came the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

People may look at this ordination service and say, “*So what! Sonoraville has ordained another as a Deacon.*”

Let me assure you of something. We may make mistakes. We may do things for show, or put people in places where they are not gifted. But God makes no mistakes. He chooses those who will serve Him with an uncompromising devotion. His choosing is sure. It’s our response that makes the difference. I believe God’s choice of David Harding will have far-reaching effects. He may be able to reach people you and I will never be able to reach. God’s given him a ministry that is unique to him. I believe people will be saved and people will be blessed because of this man’s faithful obedience to his calling and this church’s recognition of that calling.

Conclusion: When a person receives Christ, they abandon their own life and their own plans in order to serve Him. Anyone who becomes involved in God’s larger purpose or reaching the world, and proclaiming His Gospel to it, has received a special divine calling. God chooses, the church recognizes. God energizes, the church mobilizes. God equips, the church realizes God’s choosing. I know you love and respect this man or you wouldn’t have called him. So pray for him, stand behind him, stand with him, and help him. And in doing so, you will mobilize him for the ministry God has called him to. That is your duty.

Charge to the Candidate

David, would you stand as I give you your charge.

David, I charge you to walk worthy of your calling; seeking always to honor the name of Jesus Christ your Lord and Savior. I further charge you to diligently and faithfully perform the service of deacon as set forth in the Word of God, and

within the guidelines established by this church, having as your primary motive, bringing glory to God through your service to the church. If you see this as your responsibility and if it is your desire, please indicate by saying I do.

Charge to the Church

To the Sonoraville Baptist Church, do you acknowledge and affirm the gifts and abilities of David Harding, to fulfill the office to which he has been called? Are you prepared to set this man apart men to this God honoring ministry? Do you covenant together with him, giving him the honor and support due to him in the Lord? Do you promise to pray for him and work with him as he follows the leadership of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ?

If you are so willing, will you signify your assent by standing before the Lord with him and his wife?

In keeping with the New Testament practice, the setting apart of David Harding for the Office of Deacon will take place by the Laying on of Hands by the ordained men in attendance and a prayer of Ordination. Gentlemen, would you take your place and David would you and Sandy come and kneel at the altar?