

You could say that David  
has it all.  
By this point in his story,  
which we read about today,  
he's finally *arrived*.

God has plucked David up  
from being a small squirt of a shepherd  
who's quick on his feet  
and made him a valorized warrior  
and installed him as King.

And David has taken to the King job nicely.  
He's moved to the capital city, Jerusalem,  
and built it up,  
really putting it on the map.  
And he has moved to Jerusalem  
his nation's most prized religious and historical possession,  
the ark of the covenant:  
a holy box containing tablets written with the commandments of God.

David has fought battles and won;  
outwitted his foes and gained the people's trust;  
Secured advantageous alliances;  
stabilized his nation.

And God's faithfulness and steadfast love are with him  
*every step of the way*.  
Just look at Psalm 89 for a whole *list* of things  
that God does and will do for David:  
like makes him the highest of kings of the earth,  
and establish his throne as long as the heavens endure.

It's a good life.  
And now,  
David is settled in his house,  
and Lord has given him rest  
for a moment.

So King David looks around  
and starts to think,

*What next?*

He has an idea,  
and he goes to tell his friend and advisor  
the Prophet Nathan about it:  
“See now, I am living in a house of cedar,  
but the ark of God stays in a tent.”

*David’s idea is to build God  
a temple.*

Up until now, there was no building where the Israelite people could come  
and find God.  
God’s presence on earth was associated with the ark,  
which got carried around with some kind of collapse-able, mobile  
cloth structure.

But from his palace in the holy city of Jerusalem,  
David thinks that God deserves better than a tent,  
and he feels like it’s his purpose is to build God a permanent house.  
Maybe because God has more or less promised to David everything important he  
could ever want—

David looks around to see how he can help God likewise have it all.  
Or maybe David feels like he has to measure up  
and prove  
that he is worthy enough  
for the momentous, all-encompassing things God is doing for him.  
by building God a house of worship  
where the holy ark and God can always stay

Whatever is behind the idea,  
David’s friend Nathan initially tells him  
that it’s a good one:  
“Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.”

But that same night, God comes to Nathan  
with, essentially, a big “*HOLD UP!*”

*“Are you the one to build me a house to live in?”*  
God asks.

“Did I ever speak a word before saying, ‘Why have you not built me a house of cedar?’”

No, God.

We can answer the rhetorical questions.

God reminds David that God has never once asked for a house

AND that even if God wanted one,

David is not the one tasked with building it.

“Moreover, the LORD declares to you

that the LORD will make *you* a house . . .

When your days [David] are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors,

I will raise up your offspring after you . . .

[and] He shall build a house for my name.”

David *is* on the throne to chart the nation’s course

with a new ruling family, a new monarchic line,

a new “house” or “household”

(as in England’s “The House of Windsor.”).

*But*, God says, David

is not there to build God a physical house.

David’s God-given purpose is NOT

to build a temple.

And to make that *really clear*

God says about one of David’s offspring . . .

“he will build a house for my name.”

So that’s not going to be David’s job.

Seems, after all, that David

*doesn’t* have it all. Or *can’t* have it all.

Even in a moment of rest and settling down,

God will not have David

do it all

nor try to measure up.

God reminds David of what he is there,

specifically and authentically,

to do.

David’s authentic, God-given purpose

is sit on the throne and rule.

Not build a temple.

The mission God is giving David is very different,  
in size, scale, and sort,  
than the mission David *thought* he had to accomplish.

\*

The disciples we meet in the Gospel of Mark this morning  
seem to me to have some David-esque  
*do-it-all* energy about them.

They have just returned from being sent out,  
two-by-two,  
going to different villages proclaiming repentance  
and casting out many demons  
and curing many who were sick.

Now, they've come back.  
And the disciples gathered around Jesus  
*"and told him all that they had done and taught."*

Can you see them all in a circle,  
all around Jesus,  
all talking at once?

*"Jesus! You would never believe this demon I cast out of this girl!  
It was mind-blowing!"*  
*"Lord, I wish you could have seen when I cured this paralyzed man,  
and he WALKED!"*  
*"People were lined up for miles after I preached about repentance!"*

(After all, these were the same men  
who asked which one of them  
would sit at Jesus' right hand forever in heaven.  
It's hard for me to read this and NOT imagine them bragging  
just a little.)

Jesus' response to the disciples' news  
is a godly form of "Please, chill OUT!"

"He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.'

And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves.”

Meanwhile, a bunch of people see them—the disciples and Jesus—  
and recognized them  
and hurried to that deserted place  
to arrive first.

So of course, once the disciples arrive to this deserted place  
where there’s already a crowd,  
you know they are *ready to get to work!*  
They’ve just spent weeks honing their exorcism skills,  
and practicing their laying-on-of-hands,  
and perfecting their lesson plans on repentance.

But it’s Jesus—and only Jesus—  
who responds to the needs of the masses.

“As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd;  
and he had compassion for them,  
and he began to teach them many things.”

“And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the  
marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and  
all who touched it were healed.”

It’s Jesus who responds to the masses.  
Not the disciples, whom, at this point  
Jesus has instructed to rest.

Seems that like King David,  
the disciples *have come to believe*  
that they are responsible for more  
than God actually wants them to be.  
Of course, their mission is important.  
They believe in God’s mission.  
But they’re not responsible for all of it.

They can’t have it all  
nor do it all.  
Jesus won’t have the disciples do that.  
In this moment, they’re to stand back

while people bring the sick on mats  
to Jesus.

\*

Can't have it all.  
Can't do it all.  
Not the disciples,  
Not King David,  
and  
not us.

Good Christian Friends,  
I find these texts particularly instructive today,  
at a time when many of us,  
in our individual lives  
and in the collective life of our congregation,  
are restarting habits of old,  
reemerging from a latent time,  
and looking around wondering, "What's next?"

And I hear God telling us,  
*You do not have to do it all.*  
*You do not have to be it all.*  
*In fact, you \*cannot\* do or be it all.*  
*Because that's who God is.*  
*Because that's what Jesus does.*  
*Christ is the one who has and does It All.*  
*Not you.*

And when you consider that it's Jesus,  
who for us, has and does it all,  
then you are set free.

Set free from striving after all kinds of tasks and lives  
which God doesn't actually want you to pursue.  
You are free be put in your place, in a good way,  
to fulfill your God-given purpose  
and be authentically who God has made you to be  
and do what God has put you here to do.

In Christ, you are set free from the need to work certain miracles—  
no matter how equipped and well-rehearsed you might be at that—  
and you are free to stand back and watch  
for whatever someone has laid down before you,  
and then respond and serve.

It's similar for our congregation, too.  
When we confess that God is The One Who Has It All  
and Jesus as The One Who Does It All,  
well then we are free to consider,  
*really consider,*  
the difference between what we *think we should do*  
and what we know in our Christ-covered hearts  
*is actually important to the mission of God.*

As we, in more than a few ways,  
restart our ministries,  
we might think we “should” do something.  
But the mission of God here  
might actually be more vital when we listen for God's limits.  
Because sometimes, God's mission for us  
might be a bit smaller than our capacity,  
or more specific compared to our broad experience,  
or different from our desires.  
So God might stop us from doing what we *think we should do*  
so we can use our authentic, God-given gifts  
to respond to the masses  
and welcome the ministries  
that God places before us.

God is not asking any of us to have it all.  
Jesus is not making any of us do it all.  
And that is good, good news.  
News which,  
exactly like Christ,  
is our peace.

AMEN.