

Deaf Liberty Epistle

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Dedication to Rev. David Hanson



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Editor's note: You will see the sermon from Nehemiah Hanson, David's son, who preached at the funeral. Also there is a biography of his life. We praise God for Rev. Hanson being with us before he is with the Lord.

David Hanson

Nehemiah Hanson

Who is David?

He was a husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather, brother-in-law, brother, friend, neighbor, pastor, acquaintance etc. You are all here because he had impacted you one way or another. He impacted all of us because he loved Jesus and he loved people.

David loved God's Word. So, what was his favorite passage?

On the day before David went home from the hospital, I asked him what was his favorite passage to preach or read. He said with a little bit of thinking, it usually took a little longer, he said emphatically the beatitudes. I then proceeded to ask why, and he said because it is "applicable to real life." He said "You can read it and then go and do it". So, let's read and see how David read and did it!

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

David embodied humility like our Savior Jesus and never drew attention to himself. By all accounts David was the least, but with his love and humility he is with Jesus in heaven. Though he did not have many possessions or a large

bank account, he was rich in his walk with Jesus, family, and friends. Blessedness is not happiness, rather it is what God knows of us. God thought of David as blessed.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”

David is not here, but we can comfort each other by knowing that he is in heaven. By the looks of this room we see all the people that David mourned for and now he is comforted because he is in heaven with Jesus. David mourned for his family, friends, church, etc. by praying for us!

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”

David lowered himself so that he could lift others up. One time, I had not been feeling any purpose in my life and my dad picked me up. He said to me, “You are a lot smarter than me.” Now, at this time I had two master’s degrees and only my dad’s words could encourage me. He was meek so that he could encourage me. Know who God is, know who you are, and encourage others.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”

David shared and lived a righteous life. Dad always studied the word of God and wanted to teach truth. One time, I was playing football and I was struggling with playing hard and balancing that with Christianity. I asked my dad, “how can I tackle someone and then live out the command to, ‘turn the other cheek?’” He looked at me with all emphasis and intent and said, “Jesus is not a wimp!” He followed that up by saying, “Tackle them in the name of Jesus!” David lived for God with passion, we should too!

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.”

David gave and served throughout his whole life. I remember one time coming home pretty late from baseball practice. It was around 9 o’clock, and he was getting ready to leave, and I asked him why he was leaving since he had worked all day. He said he was going to a member of the church’s house. I said, “that can wait for tomorrow.” He said, “this person doesn’t have much, I am going to install Solitaire on their computer.” He said, “I am serving them and giving them something to do”. I felt worthless. Show mercy to everyone, even to the least of these. For when you do you are also doing it to the Lord!

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

David always prayed. Dad said on several occasions that he heard God. A deaf man hearing God!

I believe this to be true because he was so close to God and this was evident in his prayers.

David lived his life wide open. He did not hide anything and he was the same everywhere he went. He was pure in heart and now he is seeing God face to face!

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”

David made peace with everyone.

David had been a pastor for 34 years! Wow, that is enough years to make one's head completely gray! I believe what he did the most as a pastor was not preaching, administration, or accounting. Rather, he was counseling and meeting with people. He was making peace. He certainly did it at home with a knucklehead like me!

Jesus came not with a sword, but to make peace.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

David was stubborn about righteousness and truth.

David did not care about what people thought of him, rather he cared about how God thought of him. He did what was right no matter what.

He never took shortcuts, he cut once and measured three times. In everything he did, he did it all for the glory of God.

Now dad is in God's kingdom and his fruitfulness and faithfulness shows here on earth with us all.

“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.”

David cared only about Jesus and not himself.

Dad had all kinds of allegations set against him. I heard many of them growing up and not one of them have been proven true, only God has been proven true!

Even with the cancer my dad had in the past year, it did not hurt him. Jesus captured my dad's heart so much that everyone saw Jesus in him.

No one can harm you if you're walking with Jesus. You are bulletproof until Jesus takes you home.

D.L. Moody was one of my dad's favorite people to read and emulate. So, I thought that this was great quote for us to think upon for David. I have made a little adaptation for dad, here it goes:

“Some day you will read in the papers that David B. Hanson from Bottineau, ND and of Kansas City is dead. Don't you believe a word of it! At that moment I shall be more alive than I am now, I shall have gone up higher, that is all; out of this old clay tenement into a house that is immortal – a body that death cannot touch; that sin cannot taint; a body fashioned like unto His glorious body.” – David B. Hanson

So, where do we go from here?

What do we do with dad's life and legacy? We live on and do what he cherished so much. We love and follow Jesus! David loved to make things simple, so it doesn't come any simpler. We live our lives for Jesus. One passage that the Lord has been laying on my heart and I had not really noticed before. I have read 1 Corinthians many times and chapter 15 even more times, but I had not noticed the last verse.

Paul ends his famous passage about the resurrection, by saying, *"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."* (1 Corinthians 15:58) These are the exact words that David is saying to us now. Keep going! Run, don't stand or walk, but RUN!

Thank you God for Dad. Thank you for giving us a wonderful husband, dad, father-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, friend, pastor, neighbor! Touch our hearts, so that we will follow in his footsteps in loving and following You. Tell him hello for us. In Jesus' name amen.

Life of Rev. David Hanson

Debbie Seneff, David's Sister-in-law

David Hanson spent his childhood years growing up on the family farm in Bottineau, North Dakota. He had four brothers and one sister. In these early years he learned honesty, a good work ethic, how a farm operates and family values. David was born deaf and attended a residential school for the deaf in North Dakota where he made friends, learned to read and study, and build self-confidence. His father loved sports and encouraged him and his siblings to be involved in football, basketball, baseball and even ice skating. David learned to listen to a coach and work together to achieve victory and healthy competition. The family attended a neighborhood Lutheran church and it was there he accepted Christ as his Savior at 14 years of age. He realized that goodness cannot save a soul but only God's grace through faith in the shed blood of Christ upon Calvary and repenting of one's sins. With high school completed he left the cold winter of North Dakota and moved to Washington DC attending Gallaudet University majoring in math. David wanted to be a professor and teach - he even had a dream of being an astronaut but God had other plans. While at Gallaudet he met Christian friends and grew in his love for the Bible. They would attend Riverdale Baptist Church. Yes,

David hungered to know God's Word deeply. He met his future wife Charlene there but they did not develop a relationship until they both attended a Deaf Bible College in Kansas City, Missouri.

While in Washington DC, two of his friends and he attended a service and heard a man preach who said that God was calling some in the audience to surrender to His will and preach the gospel. God had spoken to his heart but he questioned the Lord and inquired, "How can I preach when I cannot speak?" , but the Lord said, "You have a pair of hands." So began the journey of God's hand upon a man's life to lead him on a life of faith and later pastor the longest running self-supporting autonomous deaf church in middle of America's heartland in Kansas City. The Lord told him he needed to attend Bible College so he could be equipped to preach the Word and grow the Deaf people in the Christian faith and walk. At Temple Deaf College David sang in a singing hand choir, traveled, preached, and even flew to Europe smuggling Bibles and tracts across the Iron Curtain in the summer of 1970. His faith was growing tremendously.

His faith took a decisive turn when the Lord led him upon graduation to completely live by faith, trusting in almighty God's provision not only for himself but for his family and the church he would pastor later named Deaf Liberty Baptist Church. Hebrews 11:1 says "Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen". David had to trust God to provide his education so now he would trust God to start a church uniquely for Deaf people so they could know Jesus Christ and his offer of salvation, learn God's Word, the Bible, and spread the wonderful gospel, developing and building strong marriages and families. He gained wisdom from those who had built ministries in the past such as Dwight L. Moody from Chicago and Jerry Falwell from Virginia. He read about prayer and faith from Andrew Murray. Prayer became a regular part of his daily routine. Only diligent study of the Word and walking with Christ daily would supply him with fresh messages from the Holy Spirit each week. Over the years he learned how to shepherd a flock with skillful hands and a servant's heart.

With the "laying on of hands" of a missionary Vernon Miller at Red Bridge Baptist Church in the early 1990's David received the anointing of the Holy Spirit which he guarded with integrity through the rest of his ministry. David also was a man of prayer and would pray for each member of his congregation by name. He often reminded the congregation of our American Christian heritage which the pilgrims brought over on the Mayflower. David never experienced "burn-out" in the service of the Lord as some ministers do as he believed in drawing upon Jesus' endless supply of love, strength, wisdom, and knowledge.

He thoroughly enjoyed the work of the Lord and was honored to be able to open His Word whenever he spoke from its contents.

As Deaf Liberty Baptist Church was organized and established, David started Sunday School and developed classes for the adults, young adults, teens, children and special needs. He began Wednesday night prayer meeting and Bible study. Men's and women's retreats were formed and gathering at a relaxing location outside of the area for renewal refreshment and edification fellowship. He encouraged the young people to attend camp and the adults to attend Christian conferences all with the goal of building their faith, living for Christ, and learning how to witness and establishing friendships. He planned and implemented a yearly church anniversary with a visiting speaker to thank the Lord for His blessings of the past year and look forward to the future. The 20th year church anniversary is particularly memorable in that it was celebrated at the former historic Benjamin Ranch in Kansas City. This venue hosted many rodeos and cowboy events over the years. Everyone was encouraged to wear Western clothing. David wore a top hat and long back coat similar to what D.L. Moody could have worn in the 1800's. Dwight L. Moody was one of David's favorite preachers.

David believed that church members should use and develop their spiritual gifts according to I Corinthians 12 and then use these gifts with love which is explained in the following chapter 13. For example, in 2005 DLBC hosted the successful 25th Deaf Baptist Fellowship of America summer conference at Tri-City Baptist in Independence, Missouri. This event took 3 years in advance to prepare, organize, and implement. Over 500 people attended this conference including several missionaries from many different countries. David would sometimes travel abroad to other countries in Europe and South America to meet other deaf, share the gospel, teach the Word and help them establish their own churches in their own sign language.

Anonymous donors provided for him and his wife on two separate occasions to visit the Israel greatly enhancing their abilities to teach about the Bible lands and Jewish people. Both of them made the long 3-hour trek to the place where Moses received the 10 commandments. They also met, visited, and stayed with an authentic Jewish shepherd who attended his flock. It is interesting to note that in the country of Israel a flock of sheep always has the shepherd in front leading and not from behind as in other countries.

Yes, God was building a church for the deaf in the Kansas City area to glorify His name. He had the faith to believe that someday the Lord would give the deaf their building in which to worship. (This was fulfilled in December of 2013).

David had to trust in God to build a church for the Deaf and used this same faith to trust the Lord providing for his wife and four children. They could not finance the children's education so his wife Charlene and he prayed and encouraged their children to study hard, earn scholarships, and work if needed. The Lord had provided through the years to complete their college education and are gainfully employed. Tabitha and her husband, Derrick, have a ministry to college students in Kirksville, MO. Nehemiah and Sara live in the Denver area where he hopes to start a church. At present he teaches online theology classes for Liberty University. Rebekah is a full-time interpreter for the Deaf and Abe works as a nurse practitioner in Springfield, Illinois. Charlene has led women's Bible studies, spoken at women's retreats, taught Sunday school, coordinated the Vacation Bible school, directed the Christmas drama and led the choir.

In the early days of DLBC David appointed a few men to help with the different responsibilities of the church such as an elder and deacons. However; in the past few years it became clear to David through sharing with his son Nehemiah that more workers were needed to do the work of ministry. Hence, a special service was held in January of 2011 and three assistant pastors were appointed to focus on the spiritual life of the people. Six deacons were chosen to care for the physical needs. This was according to I Timothy 3:1-13. David laid his hands upon these men for service. These men were to be blameless, above reproach, and have a good report from outsiders. Many of their families as well as the congregation attended this momentous event. It has been a marvel to see the spiritual growth which has taken place through the years in the hearts and minds of the Deaf. How good God has been.

David was one of the Lord's choicest servants. He wanted to lift up the name of Jesus so that others could enjoy the same joyful walk with Christ as he did for many years. He was a man that feared God and enjoyed life. He was positive, kind, patient, and diligent. David never minded driving countless hours over 30+ years picking up people and taking them home so they could attend services, have fellowship, and enjoy special times of celebration or special speakers. He visited the sick, disciplined new converts, and encouraged the young people to live for Christ. Preaching His Word was an honor. He loved Christ and the Bible and he was devoted to his wife, his family, and his flock. When cancer came knocking at his life's door David humbly accepted His will. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him (Job 13:15).

My last conversation with David was about sowing seed. He explained how he and his wife Charlene sowed the seed of the Word of God as explained in the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:1-23, Mark 4:1-20 and

Cont. from recent page

Luke 8:4-15. David also spoke of bearing "much fruit" as explained in John 15.

John 12:24 says "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." May those of us who have benefited from the work of his labor in the Lord also bear fruit. "And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake" I Thessalonians 5:13.

Scriptures to Live By

I Corinthians 15:58

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. (KJV)

So then, Christian brothers, because of all this, be strong. Do not allow anyone to change your mind. Always do your work well for the Lord. You know that whatever you do for Him will not be wasted. (NLV)

My dear friends, stand firm and don't be shaken. Always keep busy working for the Lord. You know that everything you do for him is worthwhile. (CEV)



Pastor Hanson



Valentine's Day

Vickie Cox

Valentine's Day Banquet was held at the white house adjacent to the church building. Approximately 50 attended and had a great time. Teresa Bauer who is Rodney Sexton's sister and her husband, Tim provided their catering service. We had chickens. The food was delicious as well as dessert. We had games and it was a lot of fun. Teddy Chang shared history on Valentine's Day.



On left: door prize

Below: a game for the group





People were piling in even to the wall.

Funeral was located at Deaf Liberty Baptist Church on March 9 which was on Sunday. Before the funeral that day during Sunday school, instead of teaching, everyone was allowed to share their thoughts about David. There were some visitors who shared also, especially from other states. At the funeral Nehemiah and Derrick, David's son and son-in-law, had shared their messages concerning David. The church building was overflowing with people who paid their respect to David. There were people across the country and metro Kansas City who came. Afterwards, dinner was served.

Calendar of Events

June 24-27

Deaf Baptist Fellowship of America in Tucson, Arizona



October 3-5

Mission Conference with Michael and Ruth Douglas



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