JM Jason Mayfield

SERMON OUTLINE FOR PASTORS

THE SPIRIT OF DOEG

An Active Assault on the Anointing

> There is an ancient spirit that attacks the anointing and your ability to receive from the preached word. Identify it, give it no compromise, and the Word of God will have its full effect in your life.

MAIN TEXT
1 Samuel 22:17-19

FIRST PREACHED
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SERIES
Stand-alone message

BY
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AT A GLANCE

THE MESSAGE

1. There is an ancient spirit, pictured in Doeg the Edomite, that actively assaults the anointing and your ability to trust the anointing.
2. It targets the preaching anointing first, because preaching is the first level of hearing from God and for most believers it is the lifeline of their faith.
3. Satan's primary tool is influence, working through atmosphere and exposure to create distrust between a person and the word of God.
4. Operation one: the spirit of Doeg tries to outsmart the word, which compromises your results and leads to pervasive doubt.
5. Operation two: it inflames existing insecurities, which gets you trusting the flesh and ends in condemnation.
6. Operation three: it undermines the covenant, pulling you back to works and away from the finished work, which produces a lack of power and then idolatry or apostasy.
7. The response is David's response: identify the spirit, refuse to entertain it, and take steps of faith toward the preached word instead of questioning everything.

WATCH IT PREACHED

youtu.be/sjo-7pNxeHA

READ THE ARTICLE

jasonmayfield.com/messages/the-spirit-of-doeg

PREACHING NOTES

Before You Preach

This message opened three weeks of preaching centered on the anointing. It is not a series. The following Sunday was "Help! The Preachers Are Falling," and this message sets it up: the real issue is not the preacher, it is the hearer's ability to receive.

Say early and plainly that this is not a message about obeying your pastor. It is not a preacher putting an authority stake in the ground. It is about what keeps believers from receiving the Word.

A caution on sources. Scripture tells us who Doeg was and what he did at Nob (1 Samuel 21:7; 22:9-19), and Psalm 52 is titled as David's response to him. Much of the rest of this message (Doeg's counsel to Saul in 1 Samuel 15, Doeg as the young man in 1 Samuel 16, Doeg behind Michal being given to Palti, Doeg as the Amalekite in 2 Samuel 1) comes from Jewish tradition, not the biblical text. Present those links as "it is believed" or "Jewish tradition says," the way the message did.

Introduction

Every day there seems to be another reason to distrust preachers. What you may not realize is that there is an ancient spirit actively working to keep you from receiving the truth of God's Word. Today we are going to talk about that spirit: the spirit of Doeg.

When this message was first preached, the opening frame was a word about a coming move of God. God is not the God of the dead but of the living (Mark 12:27), and you cannot prop up a revival that has already died. There is no move of God in acting up, in playing along, or in pretending. A church gets ready for God to move by getting honest.

> **1 SAMUEL 22:17-19** ESV
>
> 17 And the king said to the guard who stood about him, "Turn and kill the priests of the Lord, because
> their hand also is with David, and they knew that he fled and did not disclose it to me." But the
> servants of the king would not put out their hand to strike the priests of the Lord. 18 Then the king
> said to Doeg, "You turn and strike the priests." And Doeg the Edomite turned and struck down the
> priests, and he killed on that day eighty-five persons who wore the linen ephod. 19 And Nob, the city
> of the priests, he put to the sword; both man and woman, child and infant, ox, donkey and sheep, he
> put to the sword.

Saul's own servants would not lift a hand against the priests of the Lord. Doeg had no problem with it. He struck down eighty-five priests, then put their city, their families and their livestock to the sword.

Illustration: "Can you talk to your YouTube buddies?" After years of ministry online, I went back to traveling and preaching in churches. Pastors would pull me aside at dinner or after a service and ask, "Can you talk to some of your YouTube buddies? Could you just ask them to stop?" They would be shepherding their people through something, and three to five people would show up to let them know they were wrong because "the YouTube guy said this." Our access to information had started to cause a rift between people and the preached Word in their own church.

And it is not always YouTube. Sometimes it is the news, certain personalities, homespun theology, other preachers, or just the comment section. When a pastor of a large church announces his resignation, read the comments: every assumption gets thrown at it.

There is a spirit that actively assaults the anointing, especially the preaching anointing. It targets not just the anointing, but also your ability to trust the anointing.

The first anointing on Jesus' life was to preach. Isaiah 61, the passage Jesus stood up and read in the synagogue (Luke 4:18), begins this way:

> **ISAIAH 61:1 ESV**
>
> [1] The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

The ESV says "to bring good news to the poor"; the King James and New King James say "to preach good tidings." Jesus said of His own ministry, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose" (Luke 4:43). So the first anointing the spirit of Doeg attacks is the preaching anointing.

Why It Matters

Preaching is the first level of hearing from God. God has a protocol for how He speaks: "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son" (Hebrews 1:1-2). You can engage that protocol at higher levels through the Bible and prayer. But for most people, preaching is their lifeline. For many in the room, the preacher is their Bible reading plan.

> **HEBREWS 3:15 ESV**
>
> [15] As it is said, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

How do you hear His voice today if you have not read the Bible, prayed or grown spiritually? You hear it through preaching.

> **ROMANS 10:14** ESV
>
> [14] How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

Faith begins with a preacher.

> **EPHESIANS 4:13** ESV
>
> [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

That is the fruit of the ministry of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11). Preaching can carry you to the full measure of the stature of Christ. Have the congregation say it: preaching is powerful.

Sometimes it is not even about the preaching being good. It is about giving God thirty minutes. The Holy Spirit will take what is said and turn it into what you need to hear.

For most people, if their ability to receive from preaching is compromised, that's the whole ballgame of their faith.

The enemy strategically places influence in your life to keep you from receiving the full effect of God's Word. **Satan's most powerful tool is influence.**

> **EPHESIANS 2:2** ESV
>
> [2] in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

The prince of the power of the air works through atmosphere and through exposure, and he tries to create distrust between you and the Word of God.

Illustration: celebrity Christianity. Hollywood often seems to have an agenda against the Lord. Just as worrying is when a celebrity gets saved and we prop him up like the Messiah. Be glad when a famous person comes to Christ, and pray for him, but do not make him your theologian. (As preached, this named two entertainers, Jelly Roll and Kanye West.)

Who Is Doeg?

- **He is an Edomite.** Edomites descended from Esau. They could easily be mistaken for Israelites by look, language and manner, but they were not of the people of God. They fit in well among God's people without belonging to them.
- **He served King Saul.** Scripture calls him "the chief of Saul's herdsmen" (1 Samuel 21:7). Tradition adds that he was captured in one of Saul's military campaigns.

- **He spent a lot of time around the priests and officials.** He was at Nob when David came to the priests, and he reported it to Saul (1 Samuel 22:9-10).
- **Jewish tradition remembers him as a brilliant scholar and a counselor to Saul.**

Doeg, and the spirit of Doeg, actively assault the anointing. Here is how that spirit operates.

1. It Outsmarts the Word

The prophet Samuel gave Saul an explicit instruction: destroy the Amalekites and everything that belonged to them, every herd and every flock (1 Samuel 15:3). Saul spared King Agag and kept the best of the livestock "for sacrifice." On the way back to Saul, Samuel received word from the Lord: the anointing had been removed from Saul.

The startling part is that Saul thought he had done the right thing.

> **1 SAMUEL 15:13** ESV
>
> [13] And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed be you to the LORD. I have performed the commandment of the LORD."

It is believed that Doeg, the scholar and counselor, got into Saul's ear here, using the law that forbids killing an animal and its young on the same day: "you shall not kill an ox or a sheep and her young in one day" (Leviticus 22:28). "You don't want to do that. There's a better way."

> **1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-25** ESV
>
> [18] For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. [19] For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." [20] Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? [21] For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. [22] For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, [23] but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, [24] but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. [25] For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

The spirit of Doeg does not get you to question the Word in order to learn it. It gets you to try to outsmart it.

Illustration: living together before marriage. "We've got to see if it works. We've got to see if we get along." No two people move into the same house and just get along. You have to work through it, so you might as well do it God's way, where there is a blessing on it. That does not mean you are cursed if you did something foolish before you married. It means there is a better way.

The same is true of trying to sow seed without tithing. You cannot outsmart God and His process. No matter what the internet, the news networks, the comedian or the talk show host says, Jesus Christ is faithful to perform His Word.

If the spirit of Doeg can get you to try to outsmart the Word, it will compromise your results and lead to pervasive doubt.

2. It Inflames Insecurity

The Lord removed the anointing from Saul and placed it on young David. Saul tried to kill David again and again. That relationship was rooted in insecurity, and the root of the insecurity was the spirit of Doeg.

> **1 SAMUEL 16:14-18** ESV
>
> 14 Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a harmful spirit from the Lord tormented him.
> 15 And Saul's servants said to him, "Behold now, a harmful spirit from God is tormenting you. 16 Let
> our lord now command your servants who are before you to seek out a man who is skillful in playing
> the lyre, and when the harmful spirit from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will be well." 17 So
> Saul said to his servants, "Provide for me a man who can play well and bring him to me." 18 One of
> the young men answered, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in
> playing, a man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a man of good presence, and the Lord
> is with him."

Saul only asked for a skilled musician. But the young man who answered went further: a man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, of good presence, "and the LORD is with him" (1 Samuel 16:18). That was the very thing Saul had lost. Jewish tradition holds that this young man was Doeg.

So when the women sang, "Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands" (1 Samuel 18:7), it was more than a zing. Saul had already been hearing how great David was. The insecurity was preexisting, and the song set it on fire.

When your insecurity flares up, your defenses flare up. And your primary defense mechanism against insecurity is to prove your value. Work harder, do more, show out a little.

If the spirit of Doeg can inflame your insecurities, you will start to trust the flesh, and ultimately that ends in condemnation.

> **ROMANS 8:1-4** ESV
>
> 1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the
> Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 3 For God has done what
> the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh
> and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might
> be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

When you start trusting in the flesh and your own ability, you position yourself for condemnation to come back in. Nothing can separate you from the love of God (Romans 8:38-39). But if you think you are separated from God, that is the ballgame. Many people are hurting because they think they are not good enough for the Lord or for the church. Through Jesus Christ you are more than enough. "We are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Romans 8:37).

3. It Undermines the Covenant

> **1 SAMUEL 25:44** ESV
>
> [44] Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Palti the son of Laish, who was of Gallim.

David had married Saul's daughter Michal. When Saul drove David off and treated him as a rebel, Michal helped her husband escape (1 Samuel 19:11-17). While David was gone, Saul gave his wife to another man. That violates the marriage covenant in the most profound way.

Tradition says Doeg was the legal mind behind it: since David had rebelled against the king, he was as good as dead. Doeg found a back door to make it sound lawful.

Hidden insight: the name Palti. This is not the same man, but the first time the name Palti appears in Scripture, he is one of the twelve spies: "from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the son of Raphu" (Numbers 13:9). He was one of the ten who brought back a bad report and missed the promise, while Joshua and Caleb trusted God (Numbers 14:6-9). This stretches the law of first mention, which is not normally applied to names, so offer it as an insight, not a proof.

> **GALATIANS 2:4** ESV
>
> [4] Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in—who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery—

The spirit of Doeg wants you to stop trusting the finished work of Jesus and start trusting your works. It wants you to stop believing new covenant, finished work preaching. It says, "I know you're saved by grace, but…" Be careful of that "but." The finished work is enough. Jesus is enough. The cross is enough. There is nothing for you back in slavery to the old covenant or your works.

The glory of the old covenant has faded before the greater glory of the new (2 Corinthians 3:7-11). There is no more power in that system. And when there is no power, people turn to idolatry or walk away altogether.

Most people do not walk away from the faith because they want to sin without being bothered. Most walk away because at some point the spirit of Doeg separated them from the covenant: "I can't live the way they keep telling me to live, so I might as well run off." Nobody should go sin, but there is no power in your own effort. The only place you will find power is at the foot of the cross. Jesus is your sanctifier:

“by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified” (Hebrews 10:14). Like an apprentice, you get credit while you are still in the process.

The spirit of Doeg wants to undermine the covenant, which produces a lack of power, which produces idolatry or apostasy.

Illustration: Jesus and a little something else. Idolatry may not look like walking away from Jesus. It looks like “I need Jesus and a little sage,” or “Jesus and a crystal,” or Jesus and the psychic. In the movie *Ocean’s Twelve*, a man is having his palm read when someone walks in behind him to kill him. You couldn’t see that coming? You do not need your palm read. Life is better with Jesus. In fact, Jesus makes life incredible.

SUMMARY REVIEW

The spirit of Doeg starts with a small influence, but it ends with a total assault.

- Outsmart the Word: compromised results, then pervasive doubt.
- Inflame insecurities: trusting the flesh, then condemnation.
- Undermine the covenant: a lack of power, then idolatry or apostasy.

Our Response to the Spirit of Doeg

The real issue is your ability to receive. If this spirit can get you distrusting preachers, distrusting the Word, distrusting what God has said and His processes, it will affect your ability to live the full life Jesus came to give (John 10:10). Doeg attacks the means by which the preached Word can have power in your life. This is not really about preachers or churches. It is about you receiving and walking in power.

2 SAMUEL 1:1-16 ESV

[1] After the death of Saul, when David had returned from striking down the Amalekites, David remained two days in Ziklag. [2] And on the third day, behold, a man came from Saul's camp, with his clothes torn and dirt on his head. And when he came to David, he fell to the ground and paid homage. [3] David said to him, "Where do you come from?" And he said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel." [4] And David said to him, "How did it go? Tell me." And he answered, "The people fled from the battle, and also many of the people have fallen and are dead, and Saul and his son Jonathan are also dead." [5] Then David said to the young man who told him, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?" [6] And the young man who told him said, "By chance I happened to be on Mount Gilboa, and there was Saul leaning on his spear, and behold, the chariots and the horsemen were close upon him. [7] And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called to me. And I answered, 'Here I am.' [8] And he said to me, 'Who are you?' I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' [9] And he said to me, 'Stand beside me and kill me, for anguish has seized me, and yet my life still lingers.' [10] So I stood beside him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the armlet that was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord." [11] Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and so did all the men who were with him. [12] And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son and for the people of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. [13] And David said to the young man who told him, "Where do you come from?" And he answered, "I am the son of a sojourner, an Amalekite." [14] David said to him, "How is it you were not afraid to put out your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?" [15] Then David called one of the young men and said, "Go, execute him." And he struck him down so that he died. [16] And David said to him, "Your blood be on your head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD's anointed.'"

Read at face value, David's response seems harsh, even unwarranted. Saul had been hunting him; this should have been good news. But it is believed that this Amalekite was Doeg. Jewish tradition says Doeg's son was Saul's armor bearer, the one who refused to kill Saul (1 Samuel 31:4). Doeg had long been David's enemy. He was the one who told Saul that David had been at Nob with the priests (1 Samuel 22:9-10).

David had watched what Doeg's counsel did to Saul: the anointing departed and Saul was tormented. Now, at the end, the man who claimed to have killed Saul took the crown from his head and switched his allegiance to David. David identified the spirit and acted accordingly.

PSALM 52:2-4 ESV

[2] Your tongue plots destruction, like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit. [3] You love evil more than good, and lying more than speaking what is right. Selah [4] You love all words that devour, O deceitful tongue.

David wrote that psalm about Doeg the Edomite. And in 2 Samuel 1 he responds with no compromise. He does not entertain it, give it time or let it explain itself.

There is an ancient spirit at work in this age that wants to leave you dried up. It will snatch the last thing of value right off your head and carry it to someone else. This is not the coworker who gets under your skin. It is a spirit that creates doubt and distrust, so that you never hear of a preacher doing anything good, but a preacher who mishandles an offering makes the nightly news.

Illustration: lift your hands. If you ever hear a preacher say something truly extreme, you are right to pull back and check it. But most people have never heard anything extreme from a pulpit. If you question everything you hear and never take a step of faith, you miss the moments God wants to move in your life. When I trained worship leaders, I told them the most important thing they do is give instruction: lift your hands, clap, shout. For most people, that is the first opportunity in a service to act in faith. Much of my own breakthrough came when I went from arms folded to hands lifted. But the spirit of Doeg says, "I don't like to lift my hands when somebody tells me to." One day a nineteen-year-old worship leader will tell you to lift your hands. If you need a breakthrough, lift your hands.

OPTIONAL: THREE DECLARATIONS

These lines are in the original notes but were not preached as a list on May 3, 2026.

- I won't outsmart the Word.
- I won't be ruled by insecurity.
- I will stay focused on the cross.

Conclusion

This spirit is pervasive, and it is rising in the culture. But if you and I make a decision to have no tolerance and no compromise when dealing with it, the Word of God will have its full effect in our lives.

Have the congregation lift their hands and pray together:

- We will not let doubt, nonsense and fear about what somebody is preaching get into us.
- When we hear the Word, we will let the anointing flow into our lives and respond to it with diligence.
- We will seek God beyond Sunday morning: reading the Bible, praying and seeking Him.
- We put the spirit of Doeg on notice. It will not influence the way we receive the Word of God.

Ask God to honor that faith toward the Word and toward the anointing with power, breakthrough, sufficiency and miracles, in Jesus' name.



ABOUT

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