

Saul Lesson 25

INTRO:

- A. The Bible is filled with examples of great leaders which we should imitate.
 - 1. Those who honored God with their positions and were used by Him for great things.
- B. Also the Bible includes examples of bad leaders who did not obey God's commands nor follow godly advice — and there is much we can learn from them, as well.
- C. Little is known about Saul's family, except he was the son of Kish, who was of the tribe of Benjamin. (9:1-2)
- D. Our first introduction to Saul shows him to be:
 - 1. obedient (9:3), respectful (9:7), polite (9:18), modest (9:21).
- E. In chapter 10 before Saul was presented to the people as the king of Israel, God prepared him for the task in a number of ways.
 - 1. First, He dealt with any doubts Saul had about his divine calling by causing Samuel to anoint him and give him several signs (vs. 2-6).
 - a. The three signs given to Saul all take place on his way home, thereby convincing him of his being God's choice.
 - 2. Secondly, a group of prophets met him at Mizpah and the Spirit of God came upon him and he prophesied among the prophets.
- F. With that, Samuel called all the tribes together and chose the tribe of Benjamin.
 - 1. When Saul is named, he hides among the equipment/stuff.
 - 2. God showed the people where he was hiding—thus confirming him to be the man of His choice.

I. LESSONS LEARNED FROM SAUL'S FLAWS:

- A. **Saul Picked And Choose From God's Commands!**
 - 1. In disobedience to God's command, Saul led the people to spare King Agag, the best of the livestock, and all that was good, while he destroyed what was worthless.
 - a. As a result, the Lord regretted making Saul king (15:1-11).
 - 2. When God's commands may seem ineffective or might inconvenience us, we are tempted to choose for ourselves which ones to obey based on our understanding or the advice we get from the world.
 - 3. We may ignore God's instructions and compromise His standards even as we intend to serve Him in doing so.
 - a. Two times Saul told Samuel he had obeyed God. (15:13,20)
 - 4. We may go above and beyond our responsibilities on the job at the cost of forsaking our family at home.
 - 5. We must learn this ever important lesson from Saul: "*to obey is better than sacrifice*" (15:22).
 - a. Every command of God's word will stand forever (1 Peter 1:25; John 12:48)
- B. **Saul Resented Those Who Disagreed With Him!**
 - 1. Saul repeatedly ignored godly counsel and advice.
 - 2. He resented those who challenged his unguided judgments.

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3. Eventually it came to the point that he surrounded himself with only those who would agree with him thinking it was only them that had real compassion on him. (**23:19–21**).
 4. When insecurity on our part tempts us to view other people's advice as a threat to us, we grow defensive and resentful.
 5. When we become so absorbed in thinking our plans and our ways are the best, we automatically think others should not question us nor do we have any need for them to suggest anything to us.
 - a. They have nothing we need to hear or listen to!
 6. Like Saul, we can go about intentionally surrounding ourselves with people who don't have enough courage to question or oppose us when we are wrong.
 7. Instead, let us be like what's stated in **Proverbs 27:17**.
 8. In fact, God may be using the challenges of others to reveal our blind spots and fortify our weaknesses, since in the abundance of counselors there is safety (**Proverbs 11:14**).
- C. Saul Wasn't Able To Handle Anyone Receiving More Praise Than Himself!**
1. Saul was a jealous man.
 - a. This was most noticeable in his attitude toward David. (**1 Sam. 18:7-9**)
 - b. Saul definitely did not want to see David praised or have his throne.
 2. Someone once said "The people's capacity to achieve is determined by their leader's ability to empower."
 - a. Saul did not empower God's chosen successor.
 - b. In fact, he hurt Israel, he hurt David, and he hurt himself.
 3. Let us not allow the sins of envy and jealousy to hurt the cause of Christ, others, or ourselves.
- D. Saul Often Showed Little or No Interest in the Things of God!**
1. All throughout the story of Saul, it's hard to find anything which resembled a closeness that Saul might have had with God.
 2. It is very obvious that Saul did not show a close relationship to God like Abraham, Moses, or Joshua had.
 3. There is danger for Christians to confuse their **KNOWLEDGE OF GOD** with really **KNOWING GOD!**
- E. Saul Tried To Pass The Blame To Others!**
1. When confronted by Samuel over his sin, he first lied and said he had done God's command. (**15:13,20**)
 2. He then tried to pass the blame of his sin by pointing to the good he had done. ("*...to sacrifice to the Lord...* **15:15,21**)
 3. Finally, he accused the people of persuading him to error (**1 Samuel 15:15,21**).
 4. When we are caught in our errors, do we respond in self-defense by lying and/or shifting the blame on others rather than accepting responsibility and humbling ourself in repentance?

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5. When others see our mistakes and give constructive criticism or a stern rebuke, do we stiffen with resentment?
 6. We can be deceitful about our actions, like Saul.
 - a. This will cause our hearts to harden and send us farther down the road of destruction.
 7. Or we can humble ourselves to acknowledge the truth in what others are trying to help us with.
 - a. With gratitude and thanksgiving in our hearts for the needed correction we've received, we can confess our sins to those we have harmed and to God.
- F. Saul Doubted the Loyalty of Those Closest To Him And Drove them Away!**
1. We see this to be true of in regards to David, Saul's son Jonathan, and Saul's daughter Michal.
 2. Saul lived a life that didn't justify their loyalty and the result was, he didn't receive it and he didn't receive it because he didn't deserve it!
 3. Christians who want to influence others for the cause of Christ must be honest, open, and loyal themselves.

CONCLUSION:

- A. We read of Saul's sad ending and death in 1 Samuel 31:1-13.
- B. This is a sad ending to a king who could have been great if only he had been faithful to God.
- C. Saul died because he did not keep the word which God commanded him and because he sought advice from one who had a familiar spirit rather than God.

LESSON 26

David

2 Samuel 1-24; 1 Chronicles 11-29