

Wednesday Night Adult Bible Study

April 29, 2020

1 Samuel 18:1-4

¹After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. ² From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family. ³ And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. ⁴ Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.

In Jonathan and David we see the type of all-in commitment the Lord calls us to. Jonathan was willing to sacrifice anything, even his future as king, for the brother in Christ he loved. At the same time Saul made his choices as well. Saul's choices however were rooted in a self-centered motivation.

1 Samuel 18:5-9

⁵ Whatever mission Saul sent him on, David was so successful that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the troops, and Saul's officers as well.

⁶ When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with timbrels and lyres. ⁷ As they danced, they sang: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands." ⁸ Saul was very angry; this refrain displeased him greatly. "They have credited David with tens of thousands," he thought, "but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?" ⁹ And from that time on Saul kept a close eye on David.

Saul was more than angry; his ego was threatened. When your foundation is yourself and not the Solid Rock of Christ, you cannot see beyond yourself.

1 Samuel 18:12-16

¹² Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with David but had departed from Saul. ¹³ So he sent David away from him and gave him command over a thousand men, and David led the troops in their campaigns. ¹⁴ In everything he did he had great success, because the Lord was with him. ¹⁵ When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him. ¹⁶ But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he led them in their campaigns.

Often self-centeredness leads to contempt and contempt develops into fear in much the same way abundance develops into complacency and complacency to apathy in a nation.

1 Samuel 18:25-29

²⁵ Saul replied, "Say to David, 'The king wants no other price for the bride than a hundred Philistine foreskins, to take revenge on his enemies.'" Saul's plan was to have David fall by the hands of the Philistines. ²⁶ When the attendants told David these things, he was pleased to become the king's son-in-law. So before the allotted time elapsed, ²⁷ David took his men with him and went out and killed two hundred Philistines and brought back their foreskins. They counted out the full number to the king so that David might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him his daughter Michal in marriage. ²⁸ When Saul realized that the Lord was with David and that his daughter Michal loved David, ²⁹ Saul became still more afraid of him, and he remained his enemy the rest of his days.

Saul concocts an evil ruse, based upon selfish motives but David acts in faithful obedience. In Verse 29, Saul reached a point of no turning back from pride. Samuel said arrogance is idolatry in chapter 15:23.

1 Samuel 22:6-10

⁶ Now Saul heard that David and his men had been discovered. And Saul was seated, spear in hand, under the tamarisk tree on the hill at Gibeah, with all his officials standing at his side. ⁷ He

said to them, "Listen, men of Benjamin! Will the son of Jesse give all of you fields and vineyards? Will he make all of you commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds? ⁸ Is that why you have all conspired against me? No one tells me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is concerned about me or tells me that my son has incited my servant to lie in wait for me, as he does today." ⁹ But Doeg the Edomite, who was standing with Saul's officials, said, "I saw the son of Jesse come to Ahimelek son of Ahitub at Nob. ¹⁰ Ahimelek inquired of the Lord for him; he also gave him provisions and the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

Saul employs a few tactics we see today – he implies the tribe of Judah (David's lineage) is the enemy of the tribe of Benjamin (Saul's lineage). He implies he will give them everything they want... "The rich and large corporations get richer, the CEOs earn huge compensation packages, and when things get bad, don't worry; Uncle Sam and the American taxpayers are here to bail you out. But when you are in trouble, well, we just can't afford to help you, if you are in the working class or middle class of this country." – Bernie Sanders. In both instances it seems the real motivation is "me".

1 Samuel 22:11-16

¹¹ Then the king sent for the priest Ahimelek son of Ahitub and all the men of his family, who were the priests at Nob, and they all came to the king. ¹² Saul said, "Listen now, son of Ahitub." "Yes, my lord," he answered. ¹³ Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, giving him bread and a sword and inquiring of God for him, so that he has rebelled against me and lies in wait for me, as he does today?" ¹⁴ Ahimelek answered the king, "Who of all your servants is as loyal as David, the king's son-in-law, captain of your bodyguard and highly respected in your household? ¹⁵ Was that day the first time I inquired of God for him? Of course not! Let not the king accuse your servant or any of his father's family, for your servant knows nothing at all about this whole affair." ¹⁶ But the king said, "You will surely die, Ahimelek, you and your whole family."

Interesting Saul refers to David as 'the son of Jesse' not even acknowledging his name. I think Ahimelek was truly innocent of the accusation and I think Saul crossed a line here. Just my opinion, sentencing the priest and his whole family to death when they never intended anything disloyal is wicked.

1 Samuel 22:17-23

¹⁷ Then the king ordered the guards at his side: "Turn and kill the priests of the Lord, because they too have sided with David. They knew he was fleeing, yet they did not tell me." But the king's officials were unwilling to raise a hand to strike the priests of the Lord. ¹⁸ The king then ordered Doeg, "You turn and strike down the priests." So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck them down. That day he killed eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod. ¹⁹ He also put to the sword Nob, the town of the priests, with its men and women, its children and infants, and its cattle, donkeys and sheep. ²⁰ But one son of Ahimelek son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled to join David. ²¹ He told David that Saul had killed the priests of the Lord. ²² Then David said to Abiathar, "That day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, I knew he would be sure to tell Saul. I am responsible for the death of your whole family. ²³ Stay with me; don't be afraid. The man who wants to kill you is trying to kill me too. You will be safe with me."

We see here that the objective of evil is to hurt and destroy no matter what. This was a bad day in Israel.

1 Samuel 28:3-7

³ Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in his own town of Ramah. Saul had expelled the mediums and spiritists from the land. ⁴ The Philistines assembled and came and set up camp at Shunem, while Saul gathered all Israel and set up

camp at Gilboa. ⁵ When Saul saw the Philistine army, he was afraid; terror filled his heart. ⁶ He inquired of the Lord, but the Lord did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets. ⁷ Saul then said to his attendants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, so I may go and inquire of her." "There is one in Endor," they said.

As Saul continues to rebel against the Lord's will, he turns to divination (1Samuel 15:23).

1 Samuel 28:8-14

⁸ So Saul disguised himself, putting on other clothes, and at night he and two men went to the woman. "Consult a spirit for me," he said, "and bring up for me the one I name."

⁹ But the woman said to him, "Surely you know what Saul has done. He has cut off the mediums and spiritists from the land. Why have you set a trap for my life to bring about my death?"

¹⁰ Saul swore to her by the Lord, "As surely as the Lord lives, you will not be punished for this."

¹¹ Then the woman asked, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" "Bring up Samuel," he said.

¹² When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out at the top of her voice and said to Saul, "Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!" ¹³ The king said to her, "Don't be afraid. What do you see?" The woman said, "I see a ghostly figure coming up out of the earth." ¹⁴ "What does he look like?" he asked. "An old man wearing a robe is coming up," she said. Then Saul knew it was Samuel, and he bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground.

Saul was seeking an answer on how to control his own destiny. However, instead of getting a happy answer, Samuel tells Saul that he and his sons will be joining him in death (vs.19)

1 Samuel 31:1-6

¹ Now the Philistines fought against Israel; the Israelites fled before them, and many fell dead on Mount Gilboa. ² The Philistines were in hot pursuit of Saul and his sons, and they killed his sons Jonathan, Abinadab and Malki-Shua. ³ The fighting grew fierce around Saul, and when the archers overtook him, they wounded him critically. ⁴ Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and run me through, or these uncircumcised fellows will come and run me through and abuse me." But his armor-bearer was terrified and would not do it; so Saul took his own sword and fell on it. ⁵ When the armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died with him. ⁶ So Saul and his three sons and his armor-bearer and all his men died together that same day.

Saul – the first anointed King of Israel, a man who tried to have it all outside God's will.

Next week we will take a closer look at David, a man focused on living in God's will; two very different life stories. Neither man was perfect, yet God's grace is big enough for all of us.

Matthew 13, The Parable of the Sower

⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. ⁹ Whoever has ears, let them hear."... ¹⁵ For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them... ²² The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. ²³ But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown." - Jesus