



Life Group Sermon Study Notes
“Tale of Two Kings – Humble Worshiper”
Sr. Ps. James Lowe – November 08, 2020

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- What has been your favorite road trip or vacation?
- Have you ever bought something matching with someone or were forced by a family member to wear matching outfits?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org

1 Samuel 16: 1 - 15

The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king.”² But Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me.” The Lord said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate.”⁴ Samuel did what the Lord said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, “Do you come in peace?”⁵ Samuel replied, “Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.⁶ When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed stands here before the Lord.”⁷ But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”....¹¹ So he asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?”...“There is still the youngest,” Jesse answered. “He is tending the sheep.”....Then the Lord said, “Rise and anoint him; this is the one.”¹³ So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.¹⁴ Now the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil^[a] spirit from the Lord tormented him.

God made us relational. It is good to cooperate with one another to make our lives and the world a better place. However, we have a proclivity as humans to put too much “stock” in each other. It can become a threat to our faith in God.

The book of 1st Samuel recalls when Israel rejected the leadership style of Samuel. He led Israel as a priest and prophet on behalf of God by governing their internal affairs and protecting them from external enemies. Israel was rejecting God's process of ruling over them. They wanted a human to rule over them like the nations around them. Their first king, Saul, followed the same pattern of rejecting God. We all have to deal with the temptation to want to be perceived well by men. Often that comes at the expense of not submitting to God. Our passage deals with the necessity of obedience to be pleasing to God.

Saul was wealthy, handsome, and taller than everyone in Israel. He represented the desire of the people for a king of influential status according to society's standards. Samuel still had spiritual authority and anointed Saul as king. The Spirit of God was on Saul, which gave him the necessary power to govern the political affairs according to how God saw fit. This included Saul getting a new heart and being able to prophesy. However, in a few years, the Lord rejected him as king. He still held the position, but God took his spirit away. Saul disobeyed God's command by consulting a witch, offering unlawful sacrifice, and not obeying orders in battle. When Samuel confronted Saul about his partial obedience in battle, Saul admitted he sinned by listening to the voice of the people. The people had captured his heart. This becomes more evident when he asked Samuel to come back with him to worship the Lord. It was so he could be honored in front of the elders, not because he was concerned about repenting. God appoints and anoints us to serve on his behalf. It is a dangerous territory to despise the ways of God for the approval of men. We can have the position, but that is not an indicator that God is with us.

Samuel was disheartened by the actions of Saul and feared that Saul would kill him for anointing someone else in his place. Yet Samuel exemplifies a resolve to humble himself to obey God. God gave him wisdom on how to approach anointing a new king. It was David who would be king. A man, who according to society's standards wasn't significant like Saul. However, he had what matters most; a heart for God that would sustain him throughout his years as king of Israel. David committed horrible sins, but he always sincerely turned back to God.

It's easy to buy into the idea of what seems acceptable to do based on others' perceptions. No matter how we justify it, we are deceiving ourselves when we go against the ways of God. We will never be perfect, but God is looking at our hearts. He is looking to see if we will humbly submit to living our life his way, or will we settle for the approval of others?

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose one of the points below, and discuss how the lesson applies to our lives.

- Share a time when you struggled to obey God and what made it difficult for you.
- When it comes to choosing God's way over men, can you recall a time when your behavior resembled Saul or Samuel?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as other requests you may have.

- Thank God for his Spirit that enables us to submit to his ways.
- Ask God to forgive us for our disobedience and the conviction to trust him alone.
- Ask God for a heart that remains committed to him.