



QUESTIONS

1. In many circumstance God brings about unexpected grace (Undeserved kindness). List some of the ways you have experienced this type of grace.
2. Self-pity and self-centeredness often lead a per on to make choices without seeking God's direction and guidance. What are some ways to avoid this?
3. Where does our modern culture encourage us to seek for help and advice?
4. Read Psalm 32:8-9. What does God mean?
5. What are some methods (good or not so good) that Christians use to determine God's will?
6. Before this study what did you know about David? What have you learned?
7. Read John 1:9, 8:12, and 12:46. In what ways is Jesus "the light" and why does this matter?



1 Samuel 26-31

“The Lord is the Lighthouse”

INTRODUCTION

Two battleships assigned to the training squadron had been at sea on maneuvers in heavy weather for several days. I was serving on the lead battleship and was on watch on bridge as night fell. The visibility was poor with patchy fog, so the captain remained on the bridge keeping an eye on all activities. Shortly after dark, the lookout on the wing of the bridge reported, “Light, bearing on the starboard bow.”

“Is it steady or moving astern?” the captain called out.”

The lookout replied, “Steady, captain.” which meant we were on a dangerous collision course with that ship.

The captain then called to the signalman, “Signal that ship: We are on a collision course, advise you change course 20 degrees.”

Back came the signal, “Advisable for you to change course 20 degrees.”

The Captain said, “Send, I’m a captain, change course 20 degrees.”

“I’m a seaman second class,” came the reply. “You had better change course 20 degrees.” By that time the captain was furious. He spat out, “Send, I’m a battleship. Change course 20 degrees.”



Back came the flashing light, "I'm a lighthouse."

We changed course...

Now I have seen a battleship close up, and they are big. For years the battleship was the single most formidable ship on the sea. It weighed 50,000 tons and was at least 300 yards long, and was heavily armed....a battleship was not something to be toyed with.

...and the captain in the story is an interesting character. He was stubborn and well aware of his important position...nothing could make him turn away and change course...

...except for a lighthouse. A lighthouse, which has no weapons and is a fairly humble structure...and yet something as large as a battleship was no match for a lighthouse.

The captain had a choice...do I change course or continue on my current course. If he did not learn, if he was not teachable then disaster most assuredly would have been the result.

That is quite often how we are. In our pride and feeling of significance we often continue on our self-centered course and forget that God is the lighthouse and we are the ones who need to humbly change our course.

The study notes in my Bible say this...

"The magnificent truth of the Gospel is that to fear God (to give Him ultimate weight) is to dispel all fears."

and how often it is that the fears and unknowns of life cause us to act in all kind of unwise ways...and let's face it...life at its most easy and simple is still pretty confusing. Like that battleship sailing upon a foggy sea, life is so often foggy. We can't see 5 seconds into the future if we are



completely honest about life...we need direction and it must come from someone that can see further into the future than we can...God, in His immensity, is the only one who can do that.

“The low view of God entertained almost universally among Christians is the cause of a hundred lesser evils everywhere among us... The decline of the knowledge of the holy has brought on our troubles. A rediscovery of the majesty of God will go a long way toward curing them.”

A.W. Tozer “The Knowledge of the Holy”

How do you view God? How do you view His truth? Do you meditate and ponder all He is night and day or is He simply a passing thought...as you travel upon the foggy seas of life, is God the lighthouse of your life.

So as we come here to the last few chapters of 1 Samuel we see two different men, Saul and David, both on a collision course with God. Both men need to hear from and seek God. They need to be aware of His direction and understand His will....They need to recognize that God is God.

BIBLE

Let's start with David. After David's encounter with Nabal, David finds himself with another opportunity to kill Saul as he lays sleeping one night...but David doesn't do it. We see, what we have seen so often in the life of David, a trust and belief that God has control and David doesn't feel the need to take matters into his own hands.

But then something interesting happens...David panics.

But David kept thinking to himself, “Someday Saul is going to get me. The best thing I can do is escape to the Philistines. Then Saul will stop hunting for me in Israelite territory, and I will finally be safe.”



1 Samuel 27:1

The same man who stepped out onto the battlefield against a 9 foot monster of a man named Goliath, the same man who wrote these words is Psalm 62 ***“God alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress where I will not be shaken.”*** The same man who time and time again trusted that God would care for him no matter what the circumstance, panics. “Someday Saul is going to get me.” He is freaking out...and the choice he makes is an interesting one. He decides to go and live among the people of Goliath. He decides to go and live and serve a king who worshipped idols and does not recognize God. He decides to live in a land of people who did not serve and shunned the name of the Lord...I am pretty sure that this is not where God wanted David.

David has been a fugitive for I believe 7 years when he decides to escape to the Philistines.

Now David had every reason to trust God for continued protection. God has promised that he would be king and God had done nothing during his time on the run from Saul to make David believe that this promise wasn't true. But after so many years of running I am certain he began to ask...

O Lord, how long will you forget me? Forever? How long will you look the other way? How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul, with sorrow in my heart every day? How long will my enemy have the upper hand? Turn and answer me, O Lord my God! Restore the sparkle to my eyes, or I will die. Don't let my enemies gloat, saying, “We have defeated him!” Don't let them rejoice at my downfall.

Psalm 13:1-4

How many of us feel this way...daily. How often is this the cry of our heart? It's mine. So many times the circumstances of my life cause me to speak and think these exact words. “How long will you forget me God...How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul?”



...and we are tempted to just turn away, forget God, and do things our way. We forget how loved we are by God. We begin to look at God through the circumstance of our life instead of looking at our circumstances through the eyes of God.

This is what David does...his logic was good...."I will be safe among the Philistines" but is that really where God wanted Him? The problem with David's actions here is they contradict what God had promised. They fail to recognize God as the lighthouse, the immovable source of guidance...so David flees and goes and lives among the Philistines.

This book tells us the stories of imperfect people...and even people of great faith do falter. David's regular way of living has been to turn to God for guidance, to trust Him and obey Him...but in this choice to go and live among the Philistines we hear nothing of him consulting God, of seeking God's guidance through prayer...

...and during his time there, David would engage in questionable behavior, lying, and the massacre of entire populations of people.

Fast forward a few months to the beginning of chapter 28 and we find that the Philistines, who David is living among at this point, are about to go to war against Israel and Saul

About that time the Philistines mustered their armies for another war with Israel. King Achish told David, "You and your men will be expected to join me in battle."

1 Samuel 28:1

David, because of his choice to go and live among the Philistines, finds himself in a terrible situation...he is expected to go to war against his own people...



our choices have a way of coming back at us don't they...

But let's move over to Saul and see how he's dealing with this threat from the Philistines...

When Saul saw the vast Philistine army, he became frantic with fear. He asked the Lord what he should do, but the Lord refused to answer him, either by dreams or by sacred lots or by the prophets. Saul then said to his advisers, "Find a woman who is a medium, so I can go and ask her what to do."

1 Samuel 28:5-7

David was panicking earlier and it sent him to live among the Philistines, the enemies of Israel...and here Saul is "frantic with fear" because of this threat from the Philistine army.

Before we go on let's deal with something here which is very important. It tells us that "(Saul) asked the Lord what He should do, but the Lord refused to answer him." Now wait a minute...Saul did what he was supposed to do, right?!?! We didn't see David asking God for direction and guidance but it says that Saul did...so why no answer???

You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.

James 4:2-3



There is a principle here found in this verse from the book of James... *"you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure."*

How does this apply to Saul? Well, let's put it this way. Is God a lighthouse, an immovable steady and sure thing for you? Do you recognize Him as being the end all be all of wisdom and that His will and His ways a perfect?

Or is God just genie in a lamp...there for your wish fulfillment.

There is a correct way to come to God and it's in humility... "God opposes the proud, but favors the humble." Do we approach God as a lighthouse, prepared to change our course to fit His plans, or do we approach him as a Genie, one who simply exists to serve us and do what we want and fulfill our plans.

Do we approach God fully prepared for Him to tell us "I have an answer for you, but you are not going to like it very much" or do we approach him with the hopes of simple wish fulfillment...

See Saul, during his life, when he came before God and made requests of God, he did so in a self serving manner, like one requesting wishes from a genie...

And if you ask me this is why even though Saul asks the Lord what he should do, Saul does not receive an answer because he asked from motives that were all wrong. He still, even at this point in his life, when everything had gone so wrong for Saul, refuses to humble himself before God...he refuses to change course.



Instead he consults a “medium”, basically a psychic, to find out what to do...

...”A person’s true character is often most evident when that person is under great pressure”...Saul is under great pressure and is terrified and having ignored or rejected the word of God all his life, he now seeks it but in desperation and when God remains silent, instead of searching his heart and asking “what in my life may have caused this” he turns to a psychic. See Saul is not concerned with repentance or a relationship with God, but only rescue and friends, it doesn’t work that way.

We must come to God on His terms, not the other way around.

A lifetime of “under-weighting” God can only lead to ruin.

And that is what happens to Saul...Saul meets with the psychic who calls up the spirit of Samuel (I actually think there is good reason to believe that God is using this whole thing to get Saul’s attention) and the spirit of Samuel tells Saul that all this is happening because Saul failed to trust and follow God.

(WHAT SAMUEL SAYS...)

Then Saul fell at once full length on the ground, filled with fear because of the words of Samuel. And there was no strength in him, for he had eaten nothing all day and all night.

1 Samuel 28:20 ESV

Don’t forget this statement “there was no strength in him”, it’s important....but fast forward a few pages....

Now the Philistines attacked Israel, and the men of Israel fled before them. Many were slaughtered on the slopes of Mount Gilboa.



The Philistines closed in on Saul and his sons, and they killed three of his sons—Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malkishua. The fighting grew very fierce around Saul, and the Philistine archers caught up with him and wounded him severely.

Saul groaned to his armor bearer, “Take your sword and kill me before these pagan Philistines come to run me through and taunt and torture me.”

But his armor bearer was afraid and would not do it. So Saul took his own sword and fell on it. When his armor bearer realized that Saul was dead, he fell on his own sword and died beside the king. So Saul, his three sons, his armor bearer, and his troops all died together that same day.

1 Samuel 31:1-6

If Saul had just changed course. God gave him so many chances. But he didn't and this is how his life ends. Tragic :-(

Is it time for you to change course???

Let's go back to David though...prior to the battle where Saul loses his life, We find David actually marching into battle against Saul and Israel with the Philistines. Some of the Philistine leaders didn't like this, they feared David would end up double crossing them so they send David and his men away from the battle.

So David returns the land where he has been living these last few months only to discover that all is not well...

Three days later, when David and his men arrived home at their town of Ziklag, they found that the Amalekites had made a raid into the



Negev and Ziklag; they had crushed Ziklag and burned it to the ground. They had carried off the women and children and everyone else but without killing anyone.

1 Samuel 30:1-2

While David has been hiding out in Philistine country he has been raiding these towns...

David and his men spent their time raiding the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites—people who had lived near Shur, toward the land of Egypt, since ancient times. David did not leave one person alive in the villages he attacked. He took the sheep, goats, cattle, donkeys, camels, and clothing before returning home to see King Achish...

...This happened again and again while he was living among the Philistines.

1 Samuel 29:8-9,11

This is what David has been doing and needless to say people were angry with him so they attack while he is away with the Philistine army...

When David and his men saw the ruins and realized what had happened to their families, they wept until they could weep no more...David was now in great danger because all his men were very bitter about losing their sons and daughters, and they began to talk of stoning him.

1 Samuel 30:3-4,6



The place where he was living and hiding out from Saul is gone as are the families of everyone who was with David...and now David finds himself in danger of stoning from his own men. David's choices are coming back to bite him. Failing to look to God, the lighthouse who gives direction and guidance, is beginning to have enormously bad consequences.

So what does David do...

But David found strength in the Lord his God.

What does this mean???

It means SO MUCH...so much is implied in these 7 simple words...David couldn't find strength in the Lord until there was conviction, a firm belief that he had been wrong, contrition, a feeling of remorse over his actions and lack of trust, and confession, admission of his guilt before God. David had to be broken hearted over his failures...

..."where there is no repentance, there is no forgiveness; where there is no turning away from sin, there is no blotting out of sins. Something more is required than simply asking God to be gracious"...

"If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. If we claim we have not sinned, we are calling God a liar and showing that his word has no place in our hearts."

1 John 1:8-10



There must be an honesty in who we are and a firm belief in who God is...

Saul couldn't bring himself to do this, he wouldn't change course, but David did.

APPLICATION

“...David found strength in the Lord his God.”

“This means that he reviewed afresh the everlasting (promise) which God had made with Him in Christ...it means that he recalled God's past goodness and mercy towards him, which reassured his heart for the present and the future. It means that he contemplated the omnipotency (all-powerfulness) of the Lord, and realized that nothing is too hard from Him, no situation is hopeless unto His mighty power, for He is able to overrule evil unto good, and bring clean out of unclean. It means that he remembered God's promises to bring him safely to the throne, and though he knew not how his immediate trouble would disappear, without doubting, *he hoped in God*, and confidently counted upon His undertaking for him.” - A.W. Pink

I know some of you out there may be thinking “isn't this the same message you gave us last week?” to which I ask “Is there another message?” This is it...”This is the dinner Bania!!”

“...be you believer, or an unbeliever, none but God can do you good, relieve your distress, remove the load from your heart, and bring blessing (joy) into your life. If you refuse to humble yourself before Him, lament the course of self-will which you followed, and turn from the same, you are your own worst enemy and are forsaking His mercy...But if you will, take your place before Him in dust, repent of your wickedness, and seek grace and live from this time one in subjection to His will, then pardon, peace and (wait for it) joy, awaits you. No matter how sadly you have failed in the past, nor what



light and favors you have sinned against, if you will own it all in brokenness of heart...He is ready to forgive.”

A.W. Pink “The Life of David”

God IS THE LIGHTHOUSE and it is time for the rest of us to change course...

The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

John 1:9

I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in me will no longer remain in the dark.

John 12:46

Jesus said...

“I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.”

John 8:12

ENDING

The great lighthouse of the universe, the creator God almighty, shines His light through Jesus into the world and says “come to me, let me guide you, let me care for you, experience my love that defies description every day...”