

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 15TH, 2023 // 1 SAMUEL

## CONFIDENCE (1 SAMUEL 14:1-14) ONE INDIVIDUAL

Jonathan continues to seek the Lord as he did in the previous battle. This isn't the first time Jonathan has attacked the Philistines. It didn't matter that he was outnumbered. He had confidence in God and not the circumstances that surrounded him.

- **God can use one Spirit-filled person to make a difference.**

## COURAGEOUS FAITH

Jonathan didn't have faith in himself or his armor-bearer; he had faith in God. Saul, on the other hand, dismissed the counsel of God and continued to operate on his own. **In the face of overwhelming opposition, believers are called to stand faithfully.**

- **We must come to the place where we are relying on God.**

## A SIGN

Let's face it—Jonathan's plan isn't all that great. However, Jonathan is seeking God's will all along the way, while Saul sits trusting in human ability. Jonathan had the courage to know God would bring about the victory. "Nothing can keep the Lord from saving..."

- **We can trust in God. He always proves Himself to be faithful** (2 Timothy 2:13).

## "THE LORD HAS HANDED THEM OVER..."

Jonathan had seen the previous victories and remained confident in God's faithfulness. **There's a difference between an impulse and a mature seeking of the counsel of God!** Our hope is based on a deep conviction of God's faithfulness.

- **Our trust must never be in our own abilities but in the character of God!**

## IT'S ABOUT WHO YOU KNOW

Jonathan knew the Lord. His eyes had seen God deliver them. He was just reminded how God had delivered them in the past. Every enemy had been defeated, and every battle won. Jonathan knew God wasn't changing His mind now.

- **We need to know the God in whom we trust.**

## PANIC (1 SAMUEL 14:15-23) POOR LEADERSHIP

God strikes fear into the Philistine camp, and Saul has no idea what is happening. His heart isn't focused on obedience, and we're seeing the decay in his spiritual character.

- We can't ignore the importance of spiritual character in leadership.
- **There is no substitute for spiritual obedience.**

## A TIMELY EARTHQUAKE

God strikes fear into the Philistine camp, and Saul wants to know who's missing. Saul summons the priest and brings the ark in a superstitious manner, thinking it would help them win the battle. **There is a difference between religiosity and a heart for God.**

- **We need to be prepared for the battle every day. Be in the Word** (Ephesians 6:10-18).

## SAUL IS A LOST LEADER

"Stop what you're doing." Saul has no idea what to do next. Finally, it looks like he's going to seek God, but he gets impulsive and tells the priest to stop. **We can't just go through the motions in our worship.** God is not a genie in a bottle to summon at our whim.

- **God desires a relationship with us, but it requires we confess our need for Him.**

## THE LORD SAVES

It wasn't Jonathan or Saul's small army that defeated the Philistines. "The Lord saved Israel that day." The Lord reminded them of His provision and power.

- We never have to fight our battles alone. Trusting in God is being bold enough to move when He says move. **God always provides what we need when we need it** (Deuteronomy 31).

## UNWISE (1 SAMUEL 14:24-46) SAUL'S RIDICULOUS OATH

Apparently, Saul had issued a fast prior to the battle that no one was to eat anything. This is incredibly egotistical. Saul is looking to impress people with his "spirituality." He's so concerned about avenging himself (vs. 24) that he doesn't consider the needs of his men.

- **We need to make decisions based on God's direction, not on impulse.**

## THIS ISN'T SAUL'S BATTLE

Saul's goal is personal and selfish. Maybe he's trying to gain the Lord's favor? Our battle isn't against flesh and blood (people) (Ephesians 6:11-13). God fights our battles. The focus is never on us; the focus is on God and His glory.

- **This is the idol of self** (Exodus 20:3). **God isn't willing to share His glory with anyone or anything.**

## WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

Just a few chapters ago, Saul was becoming a great leader, and now pride has become the driving point in his life. He no longer cares about the needs of his men or the life of his own son.

- Jonathan sees his father's pride and says, "My father has brought trouble to the land."
- **Saul had lost all spiritual direction.**

## A FOOLISH DISPLAY

By making an impulsive oath, Saul caused his troops to lose hope and the battle to continue. Jonathan realized his father's lack of wisdom prevented an even greater slaughter. Now, in his arrogance, he's causing his people to sin. **Sin compounds and often affects more than just the individual. Christians don't live in isolation** (Jeremiah 32:18).

## A LAST RESORT

The soldiers were so famished they began to eat meat with blood in it, breaking one of the oldest laws given by God.

- Saul finally builds an altar to the Lord. Throughout his reign, Saul consistently approaches God after he has tried everything else.
- **We often look to everything society and culture offer instead of seeking God.**

## SAUL'S IMPULSIVENESS CONTINUES

After the men had eaten, Saul proposes to fix his fault. However, it's another impulsive decision to pursue the Philistines at night, and the priest stops him to "approach God." When God doesn't answer his prayer, he makes another rash oath.

- **God doesn't ask us to make oaths. He asks us to be obedient** (Matthew 5:37).

## A SLIPPERY SLOPE

Saul's pride and reputation were more important to him than the life of his son. Saul was caught up in his own foolishness and was too prideful to admit any wrongdoing.

- **Sin will always take you further than you want to go. We need to respond in humility when the Holy Spirit helps us recognize we're walking astray.**

## WHAT DID YOU DO?

Sound familiar? Samuel asked Saul the same question. Saul wants to protect his image and looks for a scapegoat. This is a huge blame shift.

- Jonathan was a man of great character. He was willing to admit what he did and accept the consequences of his actions.
- **Are we willing to admit our failures?**

## SOVEREIGNTY (1 SAMUEL 14:47-52) SAUL'S FAMILY

The chapter ends with Saul's achievements and his family line. It's so weird because it looks like Saul ends up having God's blessing. The fact that Saul continued to lead Israel through victorious battles shows the sovereignty of God.

- **Failure is being successful at all the things that don't matter.**

## TOTAL CONTROL

God is always in control. He can use the ungodly to accomplish His plans and purpose. God might have used Saul's military prowess for the sake of His people, not for Saul. God is responsible for carrying out the timing of His plans and promises.

- **We are to commit our ways to the Lord and trust Him for the outcome.**

## INVENTORY

- **Pride always leads to destruction** (Proverbs 16:18). Are we willing to admit our failures?
- Are we humble enough to allow others to challenge us?
- **Are we being obedient to what God asks of us?**
- Are we seeking God's counsel?

## FAITH

- To know God is to trust Him. **Are we trusting our future to God** (Philippians 4:11-13)?
- When life overwhelms us, do we trust God to fight our battles?
- **Where do we run when life becomes difficult?** We need to learn to trust God and His timing.

## INTEGRITY

- God expects us to lead with faith and character.
- Where is your heart? **The condition of your heart will be reflected in your actions.** God isn't interested in someone who just looks like a Christian (Matthew 15:8).
- **God desires obedience over sacrifice.**