

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 21ST, 2024 // 1 SAMUEL

SPARED (1 SAMUEL 24:1-7) SAUL RETURNS

In chapter 23, Saul left his pursuit of David to engage the Philistines attacking Israel. He succeeded and now turns his attention back to David. Saul doesn't stop to realize that the God protecting Israel was also protecting David.

- **Not all success is a sign of God's favor.**

THE CAVE

Saul has to leave the camp to relieve himself and enters a cave to "do his business." David and his men hide from Saul a little deeper into the cave. As Saul removes his cloak, a clear opportunity arises for David and his men to end this unjust pursuit that has kept them in caves for months.

WHATEVER YOU DESIRE

David's men quote "scripture" and are sure this is the time to kill Saul. One problem... this "scripture" is not in the Bible.

- **We cannot engage in creative theology because we want something to be true. We don't write Scripture; we read it, believe it, and obey it.**

DAVID GETS UP

David was finished with the whispers and gets up to address the opportunity. He draws his knife and cuts off the corner of Saul's robe.

- **God had promised David the throne, but David knew this wasn't the way. Too often, we take shortcuts that are outside of God's plan. We sacrifice the peace of God for a piece of satisfaction.**

GUILT

David didn't kill Saul, but he humiliated him. David knew that God had placed Saul as king and that only God was keeping him there. His conviction helped him persuade his men to keep their swords to themselves.

- **Faith is willing to wait for God's promises. What have we sacrificed as we have hurried to get what we want?**

SURRENDERED (1 SAMUEL 24:8-15)

OUTSIDE THE CAVE

Saul leaves, and David follows him outside. After sparing Saul's life, David pursues peace instead of vengeance. David had committed himself to the hands of God, trusting God and leaving vengeance to the Lord.

- **How much would our lives change if we fell on our faces and trusted God with our feelings, words, and actions?**

DAVID'S SPEECH

David assures Saul that he does not want to harm him and uses respectful titles to address him. David was innocent, and Saul knew it was true.

- **A spirit of reconciliation doesn't approach opposition with anger and hurtful intentions. It's not about getting even; it's about following Christ.**

LOOK! RECOGNIZE!

David continues to share his faithful heart. His actions have proven his integrity. He even asks God to judge his motives.

- **As believers, this is how we should be: we should have a record of faithfulness, self-control, and love that others recognize. We should be the ones who can be trusted when integrity matters most.**

LET GOD DECIDE

David finishes his speech by appealing to the Lord for his safety and success. Saul was the aggressor. Saul was the pursuer. Saul was wicked. But David still humbled himself and pursued peace as he surrendered to God's justice.

- **If we say we trust God, we must live like we trust God.**

EMPTY (1 SAMUEL 24:16-22)

DAVID, MY SON?

David's honest and passionate plea drew out the little capacity for love left in Saul's heart. It brought Saul to tears.

- **As David submitted to God's word, he could speak peace in a way that matched his life. It moved Saul. Sadly, it did not move him to repentance.**

MORE RIGHTEOUS THAN I...

It may seem that Saul is confessing his sin. He only compares himself to David and ignores that he has no righteousness, especially when compared to God.

- **We can feel pretty good about ourselves when we find someone "worse" than us to compare ourselves to. Real repentance is filled with conviction over our sins.**

YOU WILL BE KING

Saul makes an unexpected announcement and declares that he knows David will be the next king. Saul admitted he was wrong. But this doesn't change Saul's heart.

- **Admitting that we are wrong is only the beginning of a changed life. Pursuing the world reveals that we are still following ourselves and not Christ.**

DAVID'S WORD

Saul asks David to spare his family but offers no promise to spare David. David makes the vow not because Saul is worthy but because David has committed himself to the Lord. David did not need Saul's word; he had God's word.

- **Are we seeking the approval of others? Is God's word enough for us? Who are we really following?**

TESTS

- We will have opportunities.
- **Not every opportunity is God's will.**
- **When we are tempted to pursue a quick solution at the expense of righteousness, there may be more on the line than our reputation. Many have failed and damaged their effectiveness for a season. Some consequences are life-long.**

SEEKING

- We are all seeking a better life.
- How we define a better life will determine what we are willing to do to have it.
- If we seek personal justice, retribution, vengeance, and the destruction of others, we can't expect peace. "Wickedness comes from wicked people." What life are we seeking?

RESTRAINT

- Sin affects everyone.
- When others sin against us, we will have an opportunity to respond.
- One of the greatest victories a Believer has is the victory over a vengeful heart. We see Christ choose the cross over wrath and offer forgiveness to all who believe. Will we choose the cross over wrath?