

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 18TH, 2024 // 1 SAMUEL

GRIEVING (1 SAMUEL 30:1-17) FROM BAD TO WORSE

David's poor choices stuck him between a rock and a hard place with Achish. God delivered David and his men from the battlefield... finally, they could return to their families and rest. After a 60-mile march, they approached Ziklag and found their homes burned and their families kidnapped.

MORE THAN THEY COULD BEAR

David and his men were so heavy with sorrow that they lost the strength to grieve. David had hit rock bottom.

- **Sometimes, we think it cannot get any worse... it can. Our weak faith can lead us to try to out-maneuver God. God will use our circumstances to teach and bring us back into faith.**

FINDING STRENGTH IN THE LORD

With his men ready to stone him, David finally decided to abandon his self-help plan and reminded himself of God's promises and prior help.

- **Every trial causes opposing voices to ring in our heads. One is the voice of circumstances, screaming "hopeless." The other is faith, singing "God is sufficient" for the trial.**

DAVID ASKED THE LORD

Having renewed his faith in the Lord, David immediately seeks God's Word for guidance.

- **This is what we should do when we turn our hearts toward God, whether for the first or the hundred-and-first time. Faith will be followed by God's strength to do what He is calling us to do.**

CONTINUED PURSUIT

With God's direction, David and his men pursued the Amalekites. Even when 1/3 of his men sat in exhaustion, David continued.

- **Following Christ isn't always easy, and receiving His strength doesn't mean we won't get tired. Obeying Him does mean that He will renew our strength.**

NEW INFORMATION

Because he stayed on God's path, David found clear direction from an abandoned slave. This man was sick and had been left to die alone in the desert, but David offered food, water, and protection.

- **Following Christ means we will see the abandoned and offer help.**

AGAINST THE ODDS

David and his men had overtaken a much larger army, but the enemy wasn't prepared for battle. David was no longer looking at the size of the opposition; he remembered the size of his God and chose faithfulness.

- **Will we trust God and follow Him, even when the circumstances seem too big?**

GRATEFUL (1 SAMUEL 30:18-31) RECOVERED

On the heels of victory, "David got everything back." Everyone was safe and we see that not only David's obedience, but also his wisdom and grace were restored.

- **David's victory almost immediately brings a new challenge that would require more than a strong sword.**

MINE VS OURS

A few men had decided they should receive more than the ones who stayed behind and guarded the supplies. David spoke clearly against their pride.

- **There are many different opportunities to serve God, and we will do our part to glorify God in obedience. Hands, feet, eyes, ears; we are ALL important.**

GRATITUDE

In vs. 23, David makes it clear that God had provided and protected. Grace had infected David's reasoning, and now his conduct reveals His true faithfulness to God.

- **Do we speak truth to our brothers and sisters with grateful, gentle hearts or angry judgment?**

GENEROSITY

David had also been liberated from the soul-poisoning effects of living for himself. He begins to focus on the needs of God's people and the kingdom God was giving him.

- **Faithfully following Christ will change our lives, and we will have opportunity to see God change lives through us.**

TRAGEDY (1 SAMUEL 31:1-13) DISASTER

As the Philistines fought against Israel, Saul's army, along with his sons, was annihilated. Saul had spent his life rejecting God, and now his time of grace was over. His pride would cost many lives and almost destroy Israel.

- **Pride is more destructive than we want to admit. Where will our pride end?**

SAUL'S DEATH

Mortally wounded and not wanting to be tortured, Saul begs for death to come. Even in the last moments of his life, we don't see Saul crying out to God for help, forgiveness, or mercy.

- **The Psalms are filled with David's cries for forgiveness, protection, and mercy. Are we willing to pray like David?**

DISGRACE

Saul was dead, and Israel was defeated. The Philistines moved their pagan gods into Israeli cities and displayed Saul's head and armor in the temples of their idols. In the eyes of the Philistines, Israel's God was defeated.

- **What the Philistines didn't know—God had judged the one who rejected Him.**

HOPE

In the final paragraph, we see brave men put their lives on the line to recover the bodies of Saul and his sons. Why? They put their gratitude and love into action because God used Saul to protect them over 40 years earlier.

- **How many times will God protect and deliver us before we turn to Him?**

STRENGTH

- We want to be strong when trouble comes.
- **Exhausted, we are weak and want to quit.**
- **When we realize our strength is gone, we must depend on God's strength. Following Christ means pursuing Him and laying down our pride. Pride weighs more than humility.**

GENEROUS

- God is generous with His grace for us.
- **That grace should flow through us.**
- **As we grow in God's grace, we see other believers as God sees them. We stop comparing and determining their worth based on our selfish standards. We begin to praise God for every part of the body as we worship, serve, and follow Him together.**

BELIEF

- David sometimes wavered because of doubts. We may too.
- **David was a man after God's heart, believed God's promises, and never turned to unbelief.**
- **Don't quit. We are a unique blend of the gifts, talents, successes, and failures in our lives. God used David, and He will use us too as we faithfully follow Christ.**