

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 4TH, 2024 // 1 SAMUEL

GROWTH (1 SAMUEL 26:1-12) SIMILAR?

As we start this chapter, we are quickly reminded of Ch. 24, and this may seem like the same story. It is not. Saul may be the same, but the location, events, and David's attitude are different.

- **We will see that David has changed quite a bit since his last opportunity to take Saul's life.**

SAME OL' SAUL

Saul may have given David a reprieve after their encounter in Ch. 24, but now he's back to searching for David to end his life. David fully expected Saul to pursue him and has kept his men and family safe in the wilderness.

- **Saul will follow his sin, even though he knows it will lead to disaster.**

AN OPPORTUNITY

David and Abishai entered the king's camp. David's anxious nephew offers some made-up theology and says he can use the king's spear and kill him with one strike.

- **The setting seems perfect: God has made the men sleep, even Abner was down, and the king's spear was ready to fulfill its purpose.**

A DIFFERENT DAVID

The last time David faced a similar opportunity, he hesitated and maybe even considered ending his persecution. Instead, he cut a piece of the king's robe as proof that he had an opportunity to kill Saul. He went to Saul this time, knowing he wouldn't harm him. David had learned his lesson and was trusting God even more.

DAVID THE TEACHER

He didn't just stop Abishai; he explained that God's people should never seek their own benefit by violating God's Word. And that God's people should not force God's timing.

- **A maturing Christian will learn God's Word, live God's Word, and share God's Word. Are we willing to live in God's will by obeying His Word?**

MATURITY (1 SAMUEL 26:13-25)

LAST WORDS

Although this won't be the last time we see Saul, it is the last time David will see him. Knowing that Saul is still a danger to him, David calls out to Abner from a long distance. David points out that he was the only one who protected the king that night.

- **We may begin long-needed conversations when we offer safety instead of evil.**

DAVID'S VOICE

David no longer replies with "my father" because he knows Saul's heart and that Saul's words will not align with his actions. But he still shows respect to the king, the Lord's anointed.

- **Are we mature enough to share the truth with respect, even when the culture stands against us?**

ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO REPENT

David points again to his innocence and boldly calls out Saul's sin. Then, he offers to go with Saul and offer sacrifice to God for his sins.

- **Are we mature enough to invite others to meet us at the level ground beneath Christ's cross and appeal to God's grace through Christ's sacrifice?**

BAD COMPANY

David said that if men made Saul pursue him, God would judge them. These men had pushed David away from his homeland and his place of sacrifice. David knew there would be weakness away from God's presence.

- **Are we letting others push us away from the life God has called us to live?**

I HAVE SINNED

Saul responds with a superficial repentance. David hears it and knows that Saul is not crying out to God or going to the altar of the Lord to sacrifice. Saul is just saying words. It may be a confession, but it still isn't true repentance.

- **True repentance will involve confession to God and a change of life.**

WHAT DAVID KNOWS

David knows he has been faithful to God in his dealings with Saul. He returns the spear, knowing that Saul will still lift it against him. He knows that God will rescue him and judge Saul.

- **Are we mature enough to rest in our faithfulness and live in peace, knowing God really is in control?**

WEAKNESS (1 SAMUEL 27:1-28:2)

DAVID SAID TO HIMSELF

David has been growing in faith and trusting God more, but now decides to give himself instructions. He had been safe in God's protective care, and now he believed that Saul would sweep him away.

- **When we speak to ourselves with unbelieving words, we respond with weakness and unbelief.**

A BELIEVER'S UNBELIEF

David's doubts will lead him directly into the enemy's camp where he will stay for over a year.

- **How many times have we allowed our doubts to make us seek other ways to feel safe? We, too, could easily seek relief in the wrong place by unspiritual means.**

A LITTLE SYMPATHY

David had a lot on his shoulders. He wanted to protect his wives, his men, and their families. He wanted to get away from Saul and keep everyone safe.

- **We can sympathize. This is why we leave one abusive relationship for another or one dysfunctional church for another. We want something better.**

WHAT'S MISSING?

David is making a move and manipulating new "friends." We don't see him praying, asking for counsel, or seeking God's wisdom.

- **When we neglect God's gift of staying close to Him through His Word, Worship, and Community, our tendency to sin grows (even when we're "mature").**

UNBELIEVABLE

David and his men would slaughter whole communities and lie every day to Achish. He had left his principles in Judah, and deceit and ruthlessness kept him alive.

- **It is a wise old saying: "Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay."**

WHAT A PRICE!

David was keeping everyone safe. His deception was working until... Achish finally trusts David completely and calls him to attack Israel at his side.

- **We know we can't deceive God. We think we can deceive others. We try to deceive The Deceiver. When will we stop deceiving ourselves?**

CHANGING

- We all need to grow up.
- **Spiritual growth depends on our willingness to listen, learn, and change.**
- **Spiritual maturity isn't something we fully attain. We grow as we go. We should be more mature than we were last year, and that change in us should continue throughout our lives as we follow Christ.**

ACTION

- Words matter.
- **Mature-sounding words mean nothing when our actions don't match.**
- **If we want to grow in our faith, we must say what Jesus calls us to say and do what He calls us to do, even if the culture disagrees. If we are faithful, it will be best for us and the culture.**

REAL

- We should be more spiritually mature than we have been in our entire lives.
- **When we become satisfied or proud of our maturity, we stop trusting God.**
- **At any point in our faith walk, we can fall. A real, maturing Christian will admit their weakness, repent, and welcome change. Are we ready to admit, repent, and grow?**