**The Fall of Saul**

Today, I want to talk to you about the story of the fall of Saul. As you know, Saul was the first King of the Jews, a king that was requested by God’s people. After recounting the event, I want us to see the mistakes Saul made and then how his mistakes can tell us as Christian what we can do wrong and fall from Jesus’ Kingdom.

It is a lone reading, but it will set the stage for the sermon. I want to first

Read **Exodus 17 vs. 8-16** where we first hear about the Amalekites.

God made a promise to utterly destroy the Amalekites all the way back to Moses in the wilderness.

Now let’s **Read I Samuel 15 vs. 1-31**

Let’s look at what God told Saul to do.

Because of what the Amalekites did to Israel in the wilderness, He told Saul to utterly destroy man, woman, child and infant, oxen and sheep, camel and donkey. Destroy everything.

We read that Saul went up to fight with 200,000 soldiers and 10,000 men of Judah. From Amalek to Haviah to Shur east of Egypt, Saul defeated the Amalekites. In doing so, he killed all the men, women, children and infants.

1. He captured king Agag but did not put him to death.
2. He also kept the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lamb’s and all that was good. He only destroyed the despised and worthless animals.

In Samuel 15 vs. 11 God tells Samuel that He greatly regrets having Saul set up as King in that he has turned back from following God. He did not carry out God’s commandments.

Saul appeared to be happy with what he had done.

1. He set up a monument to himself at Carmel ( Look what I did)
2. When he saw Samuel, he said “blessed are you of the Lord, I have carried out **the command** (which one was that) of the Lord”. (What about the other commandments)

Samuel answers back by saying “what then is the bleating of the sheep in my ears and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?”

The Saul begins to blame the people for sparing the animals so they can sacrifice to the Lord your God. I find it interesting that Saul uses the words **your God**. Appears that he does not believe that God is His God also or that He is the God of the people.

Samuel reminds Saul that in the beginning of his kingdom, Saul was little even in his own eyes and that God made him King over the tribes of Israel.

God sent him on a mission and he did not complete the mission.

Saul determines he had sin because of the people wanting to offer sacrifices and he was afraid of the people. Although he had sinned he wanted Samuel to travel with him, to honor him before the elders and the people. Your know he did destroy all people but King Agag. Again he wanted Samuel to go back with him to worship Samuel’s God not his.

So what did we learn about Saul’s actions? I have 4 learning’s to talk about. The first one is:

1. **Don’t blame others for your sin.** We are the one who chooses to sin, so don’t blame others. There is no doubt that the actions of others can put us in a place of weakness so that we are more prone to sin. But that does not mean that we have no choice but to sin. Too often we act like we couldn’t help it. We excuse ourselves as if the forces were irresistible and we had to sin. But we all know that this is not true. The choice is ours and the choice was Saul’s. Does this sound like peer pressure or that leadership trying to please the people when it is wrong to do so. He did not have to listen to the people who wanted to keep the things that were not detestable or worthless. It was not people’s fault. Think about this, who should we fear, God or man? We should be trying to be more like Jesus, always doing the will of God.

**(2) Don’t presume to know what would please God.** This is an enormous mistake that repeats itself all the time. Everyone thinks they know what God wants but are not reading the scriptures to find out what God has commanded us to do. People sit at home thinking that worship services are unnecessary. They may think that I am saved because I believe in Jesus, so He won’t let me fall from grace. I can do anything and be OK. People think they can just be good, moral people and be pleasing to God. This ignores God’s teaching that we are to come together to worship him. This ignores God’s teaching that in God’s eyes no one is righteous or good. By their actions people don’t feel that they have to follow His teachings to receive eternal life. People think they are pleasing God based on their own knowledge. People think they are pleasing God in worship through entertainment. But the scriptures show that Christians came together for the Lord’s Supper, singing, praying, collecting money for God’s service, and the teaching of God’s word. God did not authorize entertainment events as a form of worship. We cannot think that God is pleased by the things that we think God would be pleased by. Why do we think that we know what God wants without Him telling us? We make that joke all the time concerning our spouses. We cannot know what they want unless they tell us. Yet we think we that can know the mind of the Almighty God! So we ask silly question like, “Do you think God would really care if we did what we wanted in His service?” After all, I am doing a good work and I am using my talents for the Lord. “Do you think God cares if we miss services?” “Do you think God cares if… and fill in the blank. If God said to gather together, who are we to question if God really cared about that command? The only way we know what pleases God is by what God has told us through the scriptures. Saul and the people thought offering sacrifices to God would be pleasing to God. Stop trying to outthink this and just do what he says.

**To further the thought, we are not justified by good motives**. This is a common lesson that God teaches throughout the Old and the New Testaments. Just because we have the right heart does not mean what we are doing is okay. God wants us to have the right heart that leads us to do what he says. Our motivation must be serve God his way, not to serve God our way.

**(3) Is God your God?** I think how Saul speaks of the Lord is very revealing. Saul tells Samuel that they would offer sacrifices to the Lord your God. Saul does not claim the Lord to be his God. Do we view God the same way? Is the Lord your God or are you serving someone else’s God? Are you serving the Lord, your parents’ God? Are you serving the Lord, your spouse’s God? Are you serving the Lord your families’ God? Are you serving the Lord your friend’s God? Is the Lord your God or are you just coming along for the ride because you think that is what you are supposed to do? You cannot serve as if He were a detached and distant God. God demands a relationship with his people. The Lord repeatedly said, “I will be their God and they shall be my people.” We have to obey him from the heart, not as a book of rules, but because of our love for Him.

**(4) Obeying some of God’s commands is not obedience.** Saul thought that just because he had obeyed some of God’s commands that what he had done was enough to be acceptable. God is not giving us these directions for us to then decide which we will obey and which we will not. Partial obedience is not obedience at all. If we tell our children to clean their room and take out the trash and all they do is take out the trash, they have not obeyed our directions. They have chosen what they wanted to do. They are not acting in obedience, but their own wisdom. If we are not going to do all that God has commanded, then why bother? If we are not going to be immersed in water to have our sins washed away because we do not think it is important or necessary, then why are we doing any of the other commands? We are not listening to God. We are listening to ourself and others.

So when Saul thought he was doing things right for Samuel’s God by having animals to sacrifice, Samuel made it clear. He said “to obey is better than sacrifice.”

**Let’s read vs. 22-23.**

Rebellion from God is a sin. It is supporting the fortunes of the devil.

Insubordination as bad as iniquity (the quality of being evil) and idolatry.

Punishment was given to Saul. He was rejected from being King.

Do we look at the things we do as being OK in my eyes. Or it was good enough for granny, it is good enough for me. People, we have to searching the scriptures every day to know the mind of God. We must do the will of God and not our own. Saul paid the price. We will pay the price. It was still a number of years before Saul died and David took over. Saul had this act of disobedience always before him in that Samuel did not see him again until his death.

We tend not to be punished for our acts of disobedience until a later time. We don’t have Samuel there to remind us of our sins. We do have Jesus as our advocated as Christians to God pleading for our salvation which is granted if we strive to do His will and are not constantly disobeying Him. But remember, the state you are in when you die is what you will have to answer at the judgment seat of Christ.

What is your condition today? Are you following God’s commandments? Or you doing what is right in your eyes?

If you are not a Christian, why not become one by repenting of you sins and being baptized for the remission of your sins and be faithful to God’s will and not your own.

For you who are Christians, whose will are you following? Are you doing what is good and acceptable in your sight? If so, turn to God’s leadership and return to Him. If we can help you in any way, please come while we stand and sing.