



Title | Who Is Serving Whom?
Series | Making a Difference in a Nation Adrift
Text | 1 Samuel 4:1a-22
By | Bob Kerrey
Date | February 5, 2023

Sermon Notes

1 Samuel 4:1 . . . Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines. They encamped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines encamped at Aphek. **2** The Philistines drew up in line against Israel, and when the battle spread, Israel was defeated before the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men on the field of battle. **3** And when the people came to the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD here from Shiloh, that it may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies." **4** So the people sent to Shiloh and brought from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, who is enthroned on the cherubim. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. **5** As soon as the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel gave a mighty shout, so that the earth resounded. **6** And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shouting, they said, "What does this great shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" And when they learned that the ark of the LORD had come to the camp, **7** the Philistines were afraid, for they said, "A god has come into the camp." And they said, "Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. **8** Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness. **9** Take courage, and be men, O Philistines, lest you become slaves to the Hebrews as they have been to you; be men and fight." **10** So the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and they fled, every man to his home. And there was a very great slaughter, for thirty thousand foot soldiers of Israel fell. **11** And the ark of God was captured, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died. . . . *ESV*

Big Idea:

Text questions during the sermon: 623-850-8809

Matthew 16:25 "For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." *ESV*

For Reflection and Application:

Monday:

Read Matthew 16:25. Describe those Jesus has in mind who fall into the category of “whoever would save his life.” In what way will they lose it? Describe those Jesus has in mind who fall into the category of “whoever loses his life for my sake.” In what way will they find it? Does this have anything to do with gain or loss of eternal salvation?

Tuesday:

In Sunday’s sermon, the main question was asked, “Who is serving whom?” And two subordinate questions followed. “Am I making myself available to God to serve his agenda?” “Or am I trying to use God to serve my own agenda?” How are these questions related to Jesus’s words in Matthew 16:25?

Wednesday:

Read 1 Samuel 4:1b-22. In what way is this story related to the question, “Who is serving whom?” and Matthew 16:25? What evidence do you see that the Israelites were trying to use God to serve their own agenda? How did it turn out for them? Why do you suppose the Lord preserved this story in Scripture for us to read?

Thursday:

Take some time to prayerfully reflect on the following questions. Who is serving whom? Am I making myself available to God to serve his agenda? Or am I trying to use God to serve my own agenda? Does anything need to change?

Friday:

In what specific ways can you proactively make yourself available to God to serve his agenda?

Daily Prayer:

Lord, help me to see my true motives,
especially ways in which I may be trying
to use you to serve my own agenda.
Purify me that I may wholeheartedly
make myself available to you to serve
your agenda. Amen.