



1 Samuel

Following The Shepherd King In An Age Of Personal Freedom

Life Group Discussion / Week Eight

SUMMARY OVERVIEW

In 1 Samuel 8, the people of Israel came to the prophet Samuel to ask for a king like those of the nations. Until then, God had ruled them through Spirit-anointed judges or leaders whom he raised up to deliver them when needed. But those people rejected God's rule; and in doing so, they rejected their identity—their calling by God to be a holy nation, a distinctive people who would display his character to the world. Now they want to be like the nations instead of a light to the nations.

The people of Israel ask for a king and the king they get is Saul. But over the course of chapters 13-15, Saul fails badly three times. He is the king Israel asked for, but not the king they need. And so: "The Lord regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel" (15:35).

In this study, we see the story take a new turn. There is a new beginning. And that new beginning is a new king. But this time, it is the king that God chooses.

READ

1 Samuel 16:1-13

STUDY & APPLY

1. Samuel was mourning Saul's tragedy as one mourns for the dead, recognizing the downfall was final and irrevocable. His grief was not over something trivial but over the spiritual disaster that had become of the welfare of God's people. The Lord speaks to Samuel and urges him to stop mourning for Saul. He has a new job for him to perform—a new king to anoint. **Why was Samuel afraid to travel to Bethlehem and meet Jesse's sons? How did the lord calm his fears?**
2. God provides a new beginning and in his choosing of a new king there is hope, even in the midst of discipline. When all things come undone or when our lives are in disaster—God provides for his people. God, our true King, never loses his grip on his Kingdom even when earthly kings fail us. **How does God's new beginning for Israel apply in the context of the present world, your family, your personal life? How does this reality calm us when we are in disaster?**

3. When Saul was anointed king, the qualities the people noticed were that he was tall and strong, standing head and shoulders above his peers. When Samuel met the sons of Jesse, he was immediately taken by the eldest son because he too was tall, strong, and very handsome. We tend to believe the evidence of our senses. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. God is not concerned with appearances or accomplishments in the same way that we are. He weighs our hearts. The contrast between outward appearance and the heart is evident here. Naturally, we would all choose Saul and not David. **When, or in what areas of your life, are you concerned more with outward appearances? What does it look like to have a Godly heart/faith in those areas?**

4. A helpful distinction was made in the sermon given on Sunday between Saul's work and David's work at the moment they were called to be king. Saul was looking for lost donkeys that wandered from his farm, and gave up when he couldn't find them. He was a failed shepherd. David was off tending his sheep, even if it meant missing out on a special ceremony with his family. We see him later on recounting times he risked his very life to save his sheep. Jesse, David's father, didn't think David had what it took to be a good king—but in fact, he did. **How is this an image of what kind of King God was looking for? How does the image of Jesus as our Good Shepherd King cause us to follow him with joy?**

PRAY

Close your discussion praying earnestly, empathetically, and boldly for one another.