

Friday, June 29, 2018

Delivered

1 Samuel 17-18

"The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." 1 Samuel 17:37

The account of David and Goliath is truly one of the greatest demonstrations found in the Bible of the power of God working through a faithful servant. The glory of God is declared in the story of a boy's faith. David is just a boy, but he has already learned of the faithfulness of God. God has given him victories in scary situations already in his life. While some may not have seen it as God, David did. He was a boy who wrote songs to the Lord and played his harp in worship of the one true God, so when this giant of a man began to defile the name of the God that David had grown to love and trust, he could not bear it. He rushed toward the enemy when others rushed away. He went without visible protection because he fully understood the invisible protection that he had with him. God was with him and God would deliver him. David knew that God would, because he had done it before—and because God will defend His name. David was right. It was God that defeated Goliath through one little stone slung from the hand of a boy filled with faith. I must learn always to keep my eyes fixed on the things that are not seen as opposed to the things that are seen. God is with me for His glory. God has delivered me in the past and I can be absolutely certain that He will do so again—so that His glory will be declared in my story.

Dear LORD, let me be a defender of Your name and Your greatness. Let me not shrink back in fear but rush in with the boldness that comes from Your power. Amen.

Saturday, June 30, 2018

Grieved

1 Samuel 19-20

Jonathan got up from the table in fierce anger; on that second day of the month he did not eat, because he was grieved at his father's shameful treatment of David.

1 Samuel 20:34

It is not surprising to read that Jonathan is grieved, but it is surprising to read why he is grieved. His father Saul has just hurled a spear at him to kill him. He is grieved because of Saul's shameful treatment of David. Jonathan is the apparent heir to the throne, but prophecy has revealed that it will not be the case. God has declared that the kingship of Israel will pass to another. Jonathan's grieving for the shameful way that David was treated by his father reveals that Jonathan is a man of loyalty. Surely he was loyal to David—we see that. But beyond this, as a man caught in the middle of the battle, there would have been a pull of loyalties. He would desire to be loyal to his father and to his friend. But in the end, he is loyal to the truth—God's truth. He knows that all of the enemies of David will be routed and asks David to show kindness to his family (20:15). He chooses to set God's truth above his own desires. Even though his father was fighting for the throne, Jonathan was yielding to his God and his friend. Am I ready to be grieved when God's plan is threatened or attacked above my need to be grieved about how I am feeling about a situation that may have hurt me? Is my loyalty to God first and all others after that?

Dear God, I ask that You would show me clearly Your truth and where my loyalties should lie and then please give me the strength to make a stand for You. Amen.

June 25 - 30, 2018



by Senior Pastor Chuck Cervenka
a daily devotional of Calvary Community Church

Monday, June 25, 2018

Heart

1 Samuel 9-10

“The Spirit of the LORD will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person... As Saul turned to leave Samuel, God changed Saul’s heart, and all these signs were fulfilled that day.”

1 Samuel 10:6, 9

God knows what is in a person’s heart. God can change a person’s heart. God changed Saul’s heart. Saul’s life will show that he did not always live according to the changed heart and the power that had come upon him. He did not always live out his life as a person who had been changed into a different person. Many times in the account of his life, it will be revealed that he lived out of the old person—the person he was *before* God came upon him in power and changed him. I can’t help but consider the fact that God has come upon me with power. I am a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). I have been made completely new by God and I have been given the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has not just come upon me, He has indwelled me. Like Saul, I am now left with a choice: Will the account of my life reveal that I have lived according to my new life and my new heart—that has been changed by God—or will I choose to live in the strength of my sinful nature and desires? Each moment of each day, I get to make that choice.

Dear God, I thank You for changing my heart. Left to myself, I am an evil, wicked, and self-serving person. And yet, You have made me new. Please let the story of my life be one that radiates and glorifies You. Amen.

Tuesday, June 26, 2018

Turn away

1 Samuel 11-12

“Do not be afraid,” Samuel replied. “You have done all this evil; yet do not turn away from the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. Do not turn away after useless idols. They can do you no good, nor can they rescue you, because they are useless. For the sake of his great name the LORD will not reject his people, because the LORD was pleased to make you his own.”

1 Samuel 12:20-22

The Israelites now are beginning to realize the implications of asking for a king—one of which is seeing it as a sin. They are beginning to see that asking for a king was short-sighted, at best. So now, the temptation is to turn away from God in shame and condemnation. This is not what would be best for them. What would be best is for them to keep their gaze fixed on God! They needed to not turn away and choose other ways of getting out of the situation. God is faithful, even when they are not. God will preserve a remnant because of His love and His promise. He will do this for the sake of His name. He chose them even before they chose Him. They are His people and, so that the world can see that He is God, He cares for His people—and that continues even to this day. I must not turn away from the LORD. I must keep my eyes fixed on Him and I must consider the prize. As Paul said, *“I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus”* (Phil. 3:14).

Dear LORD, please keep my eyes fixed on You. Please keep me from turning away from You even when it feels as though I have betrayed Your trust. Remind me that my relationship with You has Your faithfulness as its foundation. Amen.

Wednesday, June 27, 2018

Foolishly

1 Samuel 13-14

You acted foolishly,” Samuel said. “You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD’S command.”

1 Samuel 13:13-14

Saul had indeed acted very foolishly. He determined that he could approach the LORD on his own terms. He was anointed as the king, not the priest. Samuel was the one who was to offer the sacrifice—not Saul. One can draw near to God, but it must be under His terms. Any other way that is attempted is foolish and will bear a consequence. Saul’s foolishness (disobedience) cost him the kingdom. God chose him as king to be an example of what it means to follow the LORD. He did not choose him as king to do whatever he wanted. Saul thought too highly of himself and did not wait for the LORD. The kingdom would be given to another. The kings of Israel were stewards of God’s flock. They were not ultimate rulers; they were rulers appointed by God to serve Him by caring for His people. I must learn to keep the commands of the LORD—not out of duty, but out of love, remembering that any disobedience must carry a consequence, even if I have reasoned it all out in my mind and convinced myself that it is okay.

Dear Lord, please keep me from foolishly disobeying You. Help me draw near to You on Your terms and remind me that I have been saved to serve You! Amen.

Thursday, June 28, 2018

Worship

1 Samuel 15-16

But Samuel replied: “Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king.”

1 Samuel 15:22-23

What is true worship? Saul was to learn that what he was calling worship was actually self-adoration. He disobeyed God so that he could claim that he obeyed God. Instead of following God’s mandates for the battle, he decided—on his own—that he would do God the favor of offering sacrifices to Him. The problem is that he was offering these in a place where he had set up a monument for himself! His response to Samuel is telling: *“... spared the best of the sheep and cattle to offer to the LORD your God* (15:15). He seems to realize, at some level, that he and Samuel are not worshiping the same God. Who do I worship? My obedience to the LORD my God in humility and repentance and my offering of a sacrifice of praise, as I offer myself as a living sacrifice, declare that I serve the one true God.

Lord, I worship You in the splendor of Your holiness. I am continually amazed by You and Your loving-kindness toward all that You have made. Please see my obedience as a sacrifice of praise. Amen.