

Friday, June 10, 2016

Forgive

1 Samuel 25-26

Please forgive your servant's offense, for the LORD will certainly make a lasting dynasty for my master, because he fights the LORD'S battles. Let no wrongdoing be found in you as long as you live. Then David accepted from her hand what she had brought him and said, "Go home in peace. I have heard your words and granted your request."
1 Samuel 25: 28, 35

Abigail comes and asks for forgiveness. She asked for the blame to be on her for the offense of her husband and then she asked to be forgiven of that offense. This is humility and wisdom. In so submitting herself, she saved the lives of many and she spared David from carrying the revenge on his conscience. This is indeed selflessness. It is many times so very hard to ask for forgiveness, but here we see someone going above and beyond. It is a precious example for us. In her comments it can be seen that she submits and humbles herself to God and His plan for her life. She is in a difficult situation within her marriage, and yet she seeks protection and forgiveness for her husband, out of reverence for the Lord. She receives her request. David praises God for her, prays a blessing over her, and grants her the forgiveness she seeks. There is a blessing that comes from asking for forgiveness and another larger one that comes from hearing that you have been forgiven. I must remain ready to do both—as often as needed—in the humility that God desires for me to have with Him.

Dear Lord, please remind me to keep short accounts and to ask for forgiveness when needed. Help me be ready to quickly and joyfully extend forgiveness as well. Amen.

Saturday, June 11, 2016

Worship

1 Samuel 27-28

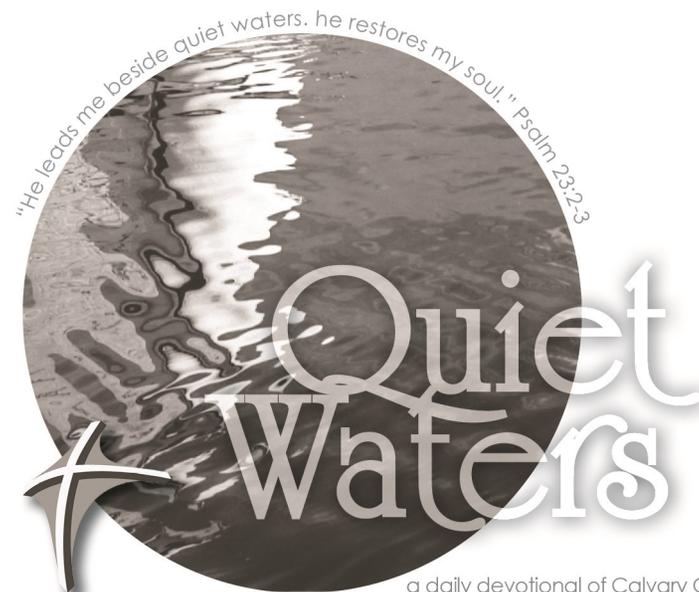
When Saul saw the Philistine army, he was afraid; terror filled his heart. He inquired of the LORD, but the LORD did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets. Saul then said to his attendants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, so I may go and inquire of her." "There is one in Endor," they said.
1 Samuel 28:5-7

Saul continues to disregard the LORD. He refuses to worship God. He seeks to use and manipulate God's priests, prophets, and all the other ways that God speaks to those who truly seek Him. So, Saul seeks help through divination. This is something that is strictly forbidden. That does not slow Saul down. He has forgotten all about how to worship God, it seems. He is approaching God on his terms—not God's. That is not worship. So Samuel appears—or at least seems to. If he does, it is only because God has determined to have this be the case. It has not happened through the medium. Once again Saul hears that his reign will end. Only now, there is a time frame. Once again, Saul has an opportunity to repent but does not. He refuses to worship the Lord. He worships only himself. I must remember that I cannot come to God on my terms and call that worship. It is attempted manipulation of the most Holy God.

Lord, I come to You and worship You on Your terms. Forgive the times I come into worship looking for a benefit of my own. Help me understand the depth of my sin that causes that desire in me and lead me into sweet repentance. Amen.


Pastor Chuck Cervenka

June 6-June 11, 2016



a daily devotional of Calvary Community Church

Monday, June 6, 2016

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.

Tuesday, June 7, 2016

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 prophesy has revealed that it will not be the case. God has declared that the kingship of Israel will pass to another. Jonathan 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.

Wednesday, June 8, 2016

Not willing

1 Samuel 21-22

Then the king ordered the guards at his side: “Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, because they too have sided with David. They knew he was fleeing, yet they did not tell me.” But the king's officials were not willing to raise a hand to strike the priests of the LORD. 1 Samuel 22:17

Saul has wandered far from the LORD. His endeavor to overthrow the prophesy of God will consume him until his death (18:28). He has determined that David is the problem and will stop at nothing to eliminate what he views as the only threat to his throne. What he misses in all of this is an opportunity to find right standing with the LORD. While God has spoken and the reign will end with Saul, it does not mean that Saul cannot find forgiveness if he seeks it. It does not mean that Saul cannot still serve the LORD for the rest of his days. Instead, Saul chooses to allow bitterness to consume him. Rather than see his wrongs and repent, he blame shifts and pursues revenge against an innocent party. In the process, he moves farther and farther away from the LORD, commanding men to do that which he should have been unwilling to do. I must not blame shift. I need to see the ways that this happens in my life and stand strongly in the power of the Lord against it. It moves me to pride that places me into opposition with my God. I must see and repent of the sins in my life at all times.

Dear God, how many times have I shifted the blame to someone else for the things that I have done? How many times have I accused a brother or sister before You instead of seeing my own folly and repenting? Forgive me please and lead me. Amen.

Thursday, June 9, 2016

Forbid

1 Samuel 23-24

He said to his men, “The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the LORD'S anointed, or lift my hand against him; for he is the anointed of the LORD.” 1 Samuel 24:6

David is truly a man after God's own heart. He is in a cave in En Gedi. He is hiding, but it is likely he understand that it is not the cave that is his refuge—rather it is the Lord. Many believe that Psalm 57 was written at this time. God apparently brings Saul right into David's hands. At least that is what his men thought. David knew better. He knew that it was not to be his hand that came against the anointed one of God. He knew the promise that God had made to him. He knew that he was to be the king after Saul, but he trusted God in the timing of that. He had the perfect opportunity to go ahead of the LORD, but because he was a man after God's own heart, he restrained himself from taking matters into his own hands. We continue to see why God chose David as the king over Israel and the throne that would endure. God looks at the heart. It is the heart that reveals who we truly are. I need so much work in this area. I long to have the strength that David had to wait for the LORD to reveal his timing. I am so tempted to chase after instant gratification instead of waiting for the perfect timing of the LORD. I long to be more like David in his recognition of the LORD's plan.

Dear LORD, please let me live out my life in patience that comes from a heart that completely trusts You and Your timing. Please reveal to me Your plans and let me rest in those. Forbid it, LORD that I should in any way move ahead of my Master and my God. Amen.