

Rescued from the Baggage

“So they inquired again of the Lord, “Is there a man still to come?” and the Lord said, “Behold, he (Saul) has hidden himself among the baggage.” - 1 Samuel 10:22

This event around Saul’s coronation as the king of Israel could be laughable, if it were not tragic. God had anointed Saul as king, and yet, perhaps because of his fears, he was trying to hide from his calling. We can read how Saul’s kingship came crashing down because of his pervasive pride, jealousy, and fears. These are qualities that are rooted in the idolatry of self; confidence that rests solely in who we think we are apart from our identity and relationship in the Lord.

How easy it is for any of us to get “lost in the baggage” today, when we begin to drift away from God’s Word and Spirit. As you know, Wendy and I have been in the midst of a big move from Washington to Arizona. At times, we have felt lost among the literal “baggage” of all our “stuff.”

Godly wisdom is knowing our responsibilities as stewards of God’s gifts to us and having the faith to trust Him to provide for our needs. Our move to Arizona has reminded us of the daily invitation from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ “to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow (him).” (Matt. 16:24). This is something we can only do through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

What could this look like in our families and homes? As Wendy and I seek to develop healthy rhythms of life, we have renewed a morning time together in God’s Word and prayer. Allow me to encourage you to talk with your spouse and family how the Lord might be leading you out of whatever “baggage” (the temporal stuff in your life) might be robbing you of a life-giving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, through His Word and by His Spirit.

The truth is, we have all fallen short of God’s ideal for our lives. I know I have time and again. Too often, I have desired to hide in the *perceived* safety and anonymity of the literal and proverbial “baggage” of life. While we are not always called to abandon our baggage, we are called daily to surrender it *all* to God. He is our everlasting source of life, hope, and peace. And when we do find ourselves running to the baggage rather than God, He invites us to turn (repent) and receive through Jesus Christ the daily forgiveness of our sins and declaration of our righteousness in Him.

I pray this letter might encourage each of us to take stock of God’s blessings in our lives; our time, talents and treasures, that we would glorify God and serve our neighbor, for the sake of Christ!

Praises and Prayers from around the Pacific Region...

- Prayer for the upcoming meetings next week (Oct 9-12) of the **CLB Theological Council and Council of Directors**. Pray for safe travels for all members and the Lord’s will to be done through these meetings.
- Pray for **Pr. George Schweitzer**, who was recently appointed Chaplain for the City of Buda Police Department. Pray for Pastor George as he ministers to the officers. Prayer & praise also for the those who have recently begun attending Good Shepherd Ministries; that they would develop relationships and opportunities to serve.
- **Women’s Retreat** at Black Lake Bible Camp in Olympia, WA. October 19-21. “Encouragers for Life” - speakers: Andrea Bernard and Karen Stenberg. More information and registration: <http://www.wmclb.com/pacific-north.html>
- **Men’s Retreat** at Black Lake Bible Camp in Olympia, WA. November 2-3. “Three Wise Men” - speaker: Pastor Jerry Unruh (Portland). More information and registration: <https://lbpacific.org/regional-ministries/mens-retreat>

Shared with a grateful heart,



Phil Heiser
Pacific Regional Pastor