God Is Our True King

Week 16

DAY 1 — WHEN WE WANT A KING LIKE EVERYONE ELSE

1 SAMUEL 8

Israel's request wasn't simply about wanting a leader. They wanted to be like the surrounding nations. They looked at what other nations had and assumed they needed the same thing. God tells Samuel that the people have rejected Him as their King. Their desire reveals a heart tempted to place visible security above trust in the invisible God. Wanting a leader isn't inherently wrong. God Himself established human leadership. The danger comes when we expect a human leader, position, relationship, or possession to give us the security that belongs to God alone. Today's world still asks us to measure our lives against everyone else's. We can start believing that if we have what others have, we'll finally be secure. But God's people are called to live by His wisdom, not simply copy the world around them.

PRAY AND RESPOND

LORD, YOU ARE MY TRUE KING. HELP ME RECOGNIZE WHERE I SEEK SECURITY IN PEOPLE OR WORLDLY APPROVAL. TEACH ME TO TRUST YOUR WISDOM EVEN WHEN YOUR WAY LOOKS DIFFERENT FROM EVERYONE ELSE'S. AMEN.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- WHERE DO I COMPARE MY LIFE WITH OTHERS AND BECOME DISSATISFIED?
- WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE TO TRUST GOD'S LEADERSHIP IN ONE DECISION THIS WEEK?

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DAY 2 — GOD IS AT WORK BEFORE WE SEE IT

1 SAMUEL 9

Saul sets out looking for his father's lost donkeys. He doesn't know that his journey will lead him into a conversation that changes his future. Meanwhile, God has already told Samuel that Saul is coming. This is one of the beautiful things about God's sovereignty: He can be working through ordinary circumstances long before we recognize what He is doing.

Saul's journey reminds us that our lives are not outside God's sight. A normal conversation, an unexpected delay, or a change of plans may become an opportunity for God to guide us. That doesn't mean every inconvenience is a secret sign from God. It means we can faithfully seek Him without needing to understand everything in advance.

PRAY AND RESPOND

FATHER, THANK YOU THAT YOU SEE THE WHOLE PICTURE WHEN I SEE ONLY A SMALL PART. GIVE ME PATIENCE TO FOLLOW YOU IN ORDINARY MOMENTS. HELP ME SEEK YOUR WISDOM WITHOUT ASSUMING I MUST UNDERSTAND EVERY DETAIL OF YOUR PLAN. AMEN.

CHECK OUT PROVERBS 16:9

REFLECTION QUESTION

- CAN I REMAIN FAITHFUL WHEN I DON'T YET UNDERSTAND WHERE GOD IS LEADING?

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DAY 3 — CHOSEN BY GOD, EQUIPPED BY HIS SPIRIT

1 SAMUEL 10

Saul is publicly identified as Israel's king, and God's Spirit comes upon him. His calling is not merely a promotion or a new title; he is being entrusted with responsibility before God.

We sometimes focus so much on getting a role that we forget the character required to carry it. Yet a position cannot substitute for dependence on God. Whether someone leads a church, serves a family, teaches children, or supports a friend, faithful service requires humility and a willingness to be guided by God's Word.

Notice, too, that Saul initially hides among the baggage when he is to be presented as king (1 Samuel 10:22). The chapter reminds us that being called to a responsibility and being ready to carry it faithfully are not exactly the same thing.

PRAY AND RESPOND

HOLY SPIRIT, HELP ME DEPEND ON YOU RATHER THAN MY OWN ABILITY. DEVELOP HUMILITY, COURAGE, AND FAITHFULNESS IN ME. LET MY CHARACTER GROW ALONGSIDE MY RESPONSIBILITIES, AND HELP ME SERVE FOR YOUR GLORY. AMEN.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- WHERE HAS GOD ENTRUSTED YOU WITH RESPONSIBILITY? WHAT KIND OF CHARACTER WILL HELP YOU CARRY IT WELL?

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Week 16

DAY 4 — A KING WHO MUST REMEMBER WHO RULES

1 SAMUEL 11–12

Saul leads Israel to victory against the Ammonites. The people celebrate and renew the kingdom. Yet Samuel uses the moment to remind everyone that their future depends on remaining faithful to God. This is a crucial distinction: a successful leader is not automatically the ultimate authority. Saul may lead the nation, but he is still accountable to the Lord. Human leadership can be a gift, but no human leader is perfect or deserves the place that belongs to God. Healthy leadership recognizes its limits, serves others, and remains under God's authority. Samuel also reassures the people that God will not abandon them, while calling them to fear the Lord and serve Him faithfully. God's kingship combines righteous authority with covenant faithfulness.

PRAY AND RESPOND

RIGHTEOUS KING, THANK YOU FOR BEING PERFECTLY FAITHFUL AND JUST. HELP ME RESPECT GOOD LEADERSHIP WITHOUT PLACING ANYONE ABOVE YOU. TEACH THOSE WHO LEAD TO SERVE WITH INTEGRITY, AND HELP ME LIVE FAITHFULLY UNDER YOUR AUTHORITY. AMEN.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- THINK ABOUT THE PEOPLE WHO LEAD YOU. HOW CAN YOU RESPECT THEIR ROLE WHILE KEEPING GOD AS YOUR HIGHEST AUTHORITY?

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DAY 5 — WHEN FEAR MAKES US TAKE CONTROL

1 SAMUEL 13

Saul sees his troops scattering and the Philistine threat growing. Samuel has not arrived when Saul expects him to, and Saul takes matters into his own hands by offering the burnt offering. Saul's explanation reveals the pressure he felt. But instead of trusting God's instruction, he allows fear to shape his decision. We face similar temptations. When a situation feels uncertain, we may rush, compromise our convictions, or justify a wrong choice because we believe the outcome depends entirely on us. Trusting God doesn't mean doing nothing. It means acting faithfully within His instructions rather than disobeying Him to secure the result we want.

PRAY AND RESPOND

LORD, WHEN PRESSURE RISES, STEADY MY HEART. HELP ME DISTINGUISH FAITHFUL ACTION FROM FEAR-DRIVEN CONTROL. GIVE ME THE COURAGE TO OBEY YOU EVEN WHEN WAITING IS UNCOMFORTABLE. AMEN.

CHECK OUT: PROVERBS 3:5–6

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- WHAT FEARS MOST OFTEN TEMPT ME TO RUSH AHEAD OF GOD?
- HOW CAN I CHOOSE OBEDIENCE EVEN WHEN I CANNOT CONTROL THE OUTCOME?

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Week 16

DAY 6 — GOD IS NOT LIMITED BY OUR NUMBERS
1 SAMUEL 14

Jonathan believes the Lord can save by many or by few. While Israel faces a formidable enemy, Jonathan acts with courage and trust in God's power.
The chapter contrasts Jonathan's faith with Saul's increasingly restrictive decisions. Saul's impulsive oath burdens the people, and Jonathan unknowingly violates it after tasting honey. The story shows that leadership decisions affect others and that zeal without wisdom can create unnecessary burdens.
Jonathan's confidence is not that he can guarantee victory. He recognizes that the outcome belongs to God. Faith is not pretending that obstacles are small; it is recognizing that God is greater than the obstacles.

PRAY AND RESPOND

ALMIGHTY GOD, YOU ARE NOT LIMITED BY WHAT I LACK. GIVE ME JONATHAN'S COURAGE TO TRUST YOU, ALONG WITH THE WISDOM TO ACT RESPONSIBLY. HELP ME RELY ON YOUR STRENGTH RATHER THAN BOAST IN MY OWN. AMEN.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- WHERE ARE YOU MEASURING A CHALLENGE ONLY BY YOUR OWN STRENGTH OR AVAILABLE RESOURCES?

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Week 16

DAY 7 — OBEDIENCE IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE
1 SAMUEL 15

God gives Saul a specific command concerning the Amalekites. Saul does not carry it out fully, sparing Agag and keeping the best livestock. When confronted, he offers explanations and shifts responsibility rather than fully owning his disobedience. Samuel's response is unforgettable: obedience is better than sacrifice. Religious activity cannot replace a heart that listens to God. This does not mean worship, prayer, or sacrifice are unimportant. It means they must never become substitutes for surrender. We cannot deliberately ignore God's Word and then use religious activity to make ourselves feel right. Saul wanted to preserve the appearance of obedience while doing things his own way. The warning for us is clear: God is not merely interested in what we offer Him publicly. He cares about whether we genuinely listen to Him.

PRAY AND RESPOND

TRUE KING, SEARCH MY HEART. FORGIVE ME FOR THE TIMES I HAVE JUSTIFIED DISOBEDIENCE OR CARED MORE ABOUT APPEARANCES THAN FAITHFULNESS. GIVE ME A TEACHABLE HEART THAT LISTENS TO YOUR WORD AND FOLLOWS YOU SINCERELY. AMEN.

CHECK OUT: JAMES 1:22; JOHN 14:15

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- HAVE I EVER USED GOOD INTENTIONS TO JUSTIFY A CHOICE I KNEW WAS WRONG?
- WHAT IS ONE CLEAR STEP OF OBEDIENCE I NEED TO TAKE THIS WEEK?