

1 Samuel 13-14
"Faithfulness Is Never Wasted"

(READ 1 Samuel 13:5-8)

~ PRAY ~

I'VE TITLED TODAY'S MESSAGE...

- *"Faithfulness Is Never Wasted"*
 - o (1 Samuel 13 – 14)

~ INTRO ~

THIS IS SOMETHING THE LORD HAS BEEN TEACHING ME...

- And it's a simple concept that's grounded in...
 - o God is who He says He is...
 - His Word is true
 - His promises are trustworthy
 - His ways are good

IF THESE THINGS ARE TRUE...

- Then the decisions I make...
 - o Should reflect what I believe about Him.

BECAUSE FAITH ISN'T SIMPLY BELIEVING SOMETHING ABOUT GOD...

- It's allowing what I believe about God...
 - o To influence how I live!

BUT HERE'S WHERE THE STRUGGLE BEGINS...

- What happens when God's Word conflicts with what I want?
 - o When obedience becomes inconvenient?
 - o When following Jesus requires me to surrender something?

WILL I CONTINUE TO TRUST HIM...

- Or will I begin trying to serve Him on my own terms?

YOU SEE...

- Faithfulness is never wasted...
 - o But compromise often promises us something...
 - That can never truly deliver

AND THAT'S WHAT WE'RE GOING TO SEE TODAY...

- In the life of Israel's first king...

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- A man who desperately wanted God’s help...
 - But wasn’t willing to submit to God’s instruction.

~ IDEA #1 – Saul’s Compromise (13:1-15) ~

(vv.1-8) The context:

HERE’S WHAT’S HAPPENING...

- Saul’s been crowned king for a short season (v.1)
- He begins orchestrating & establishing his army (v.2)
- Jonathan attacks the Phillistine garrison (v.3)
- The Philistines gather an overwhelming force (v.5)
- Israel’s soldiers begin hiding & fleeing (v.6-7)
- Saul waits seven days, but Samuel doesn’t show (v.8)

SAUL’S CIRCUMSTANCES WERE LEGITIMATELY DIFFICULT...

- Everything suggested he needed to do something...
 - But Saul received specific instructions...

"You shall go down before me to Gilgal; and surely I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings [and] make sacrifices of peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, till I come to you and show you what you should do." (1Sa 10:8 NKJV)

- Saul was caught between what he could see with his eyes...
 - And what he knew God had instructed him to do.

THIS IS WHERE OBEDIENCE CAN BECOME DIFFICULT...

- Because our circumstances appear to demand something different...
 - We know what scripture teaches...
 - But following that may cost us something.
 - That’s where the temptation to compromise begins.

REMEMBER THIS:

- The moment my circumstances become the justification...
 - For disregarding God’s Word...
 - I’ve begun serving God on my own terms.

(vv. 9-12) The compromise:

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SAUL MOVES TO ACTION...

- And offers a burnt offering...
 - But Samuel arrives immediately afterward.

WHEN CONFRONTED SAUL PROVIDES AN EXPLANATION...

- The people were scattering
- Samuel hadn't arrived
- The Philistines were approaching
- He felt compelled to act
 - Forced to do something.

SAUL LEGITIMATELY WANTED & NEEDED GOD'S HELP...

- And Sought God's favor before the battle

“... *made supplication*”

- *entreat the favour of*, i.e. aim at success, prosperity, etc., through his favour of (in anticipation of war).

BUT...

- He attempted to secure God's favor Through an act of disobedience.
 - He disregarded God's instruction to accomplish
 - What he thought was necessary.

THEN...

- He made his circumstances the justification...
 - For disregarding God's command!
- Saul wanted God's blessing...
 - Without submitting to God's authority.
- **Here's the irony...**
 - He was willing to offer a sacrifice...
 - But unwilling to sacrifice control.

HERE'S THE PROBLEM...

- It's possible to genuinely desire the things of God...
 - Without being willing to surrender ourselves to God.

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(vv.13-15) The consequences

SAMUEL CONFRONTS SAULS DISOBEDIENCE...

- And announces that Saul’s dynasty will not continue...
 - God wants a “man after His own heart”

SAUL COMPROMISED TO STOP HIS ARMY FROM DETERIORATING...

- But his disobedience caused him to forfeit the kingdom...
 - A moment of sacrifice would have benefited him far more...
 - Than the moment of compromise did.

THIS IS REAL FOR US TOO...

- Because we trade the goodness of walking in God’s will...
 - For the temporary satisfaction of getting our own way.
- Compromise can promise security / conform / control...
 - But those promises are unreliable.

KEY:

- Faithfulness to Jesus is always more valuable...
 - Than the temporary security we think we gain through compromise

~ IDEA #2 – Jonathan’s Confidence (13:16 – 14:14) ~

(13:16-23) Israel’s weakness

ISRAEL IS AT A HUGE DISADVANTAGE...

- The Philistines have restricted access to the blacksmiths...
 - Israel lacked soldiers & weapons.
- They lack the military strength to save themselves.

UNDERSTAND THAT CIRCUMSTANCES EXPOSE OUR LIMITS...

- But they do not limit God’s ability.

(14:1-6) Jonathan’s confidence

JONATHAN DECIDES TO APPROACH THE PHILLISTINE GARRISON...

- He acknowledges uncertainty regarding the outcome...

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- While expressing confidence in who God was. (v.6)
- The military disadvantage hadn't disappeared...
 - What changed was the perspective of the man responding to it.

HERE'S THE DIFFERENCE...

- Saul wanted God's help but acted contrary to His instruction...
 - Jon trusted God's ability without demanding a particular outcome

HERE THE LESSON:

- Faith believes God is who He says He is...
 - And lives accordingly.

THERE'S SOMETHING WE CAN'T MISS HERE...

- We're trusting in a God who loves us!
 - He's committed Himself to us through Christ
 - He's given us His Spirit
 - He's promised to never leave us or forget about us
- So why should we let fear dictate our obedience!?

(14:7-14) Jonathan's Action

JONATHAN'S CONFIDENCE PRODUCES ACTION...

- He believes God is powerful and his actions show that conviction
 - Regardless of God promising victory.

OUR FAITH ALWAYS PRODUCES A RESPONSE...

- Sometimes it requires waiting...
- Sometimes it requires acting...
 - But it always requires trusting God's character

~ IDEA #3 – The Lord Deliverance (14:15-23) ~

(vv.15-23) God Brings The Victory

PANIC SPREADS THROUGH THE PHILLISTINE FORCES...

- The earth shakes and the enemy begins to defeat itself...

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- Then Israel joins the battle.
 - And “... *the LORD saved Israel that day...*” (v. 23)

JONATHAN ACTED IN CONFIDENCE...

- But God accomplished the victory...
 - Even through the lack of resources and difficult circumstances.

WE CAN FAITHFULLY OBEY GOD...

- But we cannot guarantee the results...
 - The outcome remains in His hands

THE LESSON:

- The results of our obedience belong to God...
 - But the responsibility to follow belongs to us.

(Gal. 6:7-9) NLT

SOMETIMES OUR OBEDIENCE PRODUCES IMMEDIATE FRUIT...

- Sometimes we don't see the result for years...
 - Sometimes the circumstances get worse after we obey...
 - But there's a harvest associated with sowing to the Spirit

HERE'S THE POINT:

- Faithfulness is never wasted even if the fruit isn't immediately visible...
 - Or it doesn't look the way we expected.

~ IN CLOSING (CALL WORSHIP TEAM) ~

AS WE BEGIN TO CLOSE WE'VE SEEN:

- Saul choose to take control & compromise...
 - Because his circumstances made obedience appear optional
- Jonathan choose to trust the Lord and acted by faith...
 - Because he believed God at His word and trusted His faithfulness
- What will I do when God's Word conflicts with what I want?

WE CAN CONFIDENTLY SURRENDER OUR LIVES TO GOD...

- Because of what He's already done through Christ...

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- He’s demonstrated His love / faithfulness / commitment
- So when we’re tempted to compromise...
 - We can look to the cross and remember...
 - Faithfulness is never wasted...
 - Because the God we’re following is always faithful