

# 1 Samuel 15

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- [ 0 : 00 ] Please turn to the book of 1st Samuel and we are on chapter 15. So in most of our Sunday mornings we are studying our way through the book of Matthew.
- But once a month we are taking a break and we are continuing our study in 1st Samuel that we began several weeks ago. And so we will continue going through. Last time, last month I did a rather foolish thing and attempted to do two chapters.
- That didn't go so well and I thank you for your patience. Today we are just going to do the one chapter, chapter 15. Although as I got into it, I mean Ali will tell you, I really struggled with this text.
- And I think, well I think we will just see how we go. It covers some really tricky, knotty subjects that, yeah I just think we need to, we just have to face into them.
- So I am going to begin with a word of prayer and ask the Lord to just help us and then we will see how we go. Father we thank you for your word. Lord we know that your word is living and active.
- [ 1 : 09 ] We know that it is sharper than any double-edged sword and that it pierces even the soul and the spirit. And Lord it is my prayer, it is our prayer today that your word would have its purpose.
- Lord you say of it that it is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. And you intend your words to be instructive. Not just as a, huh that's interesting kind of a way.
- But as a guiding us day to day. Guiding us as we make our plans for our lives. Guiding us on what is true and what is error. Lord you intend your words to be foundational in our lives.
- And it's my prayer today that this study would contribute to that. That it be part of that Lord. So guide me, guard my mouth from saying anything erroneous. Lord help me to be clear on that which is true and right.
- Lord may your spirit move and bless your words today. In Jesus name I ask. Amen. Amen. Well, by way of a brief introduction for 1 Samuel 15.
- [ 2 : 13 ] Generally the book of 1 Samuel is believed to have been written by the prophet Samuel. And round figures. This is about a thousand BC.
- Give or take. That's where we are roughly in history. So we've had the Exodus. We've had Israel coming out of Egypt. We've had Joshua. And we've had Joshua's campaign to start to clear the land.
- But if you remember. There were some nations that were left behind to test Israel in the land. And then we saw the time of the judges. When we saw that cycle of sin.
- And a judge would be raised up when the people cried out. And God would deliver his people. And then there would be a time of peace. And Samuel was one of those judges. In actual fact he was the last of those judges.
- And because God's plan was. And it was to give Israel a king. A king that he would choose. But what we've seen as we've gone through.

- [ 3 : 15 ] Is that the people demanded one early. And Saul was selected. And I will say God appointed Saul. God called him out and said.
- I want that guy please. But we're going to see. Well we saw last week actually. Saul fail. And this week we're going to see. I guess the climax of Saul's failure.
- And at the end of the last chapter. In fact no it wasn't. It was chapter 13. Verse 13 and 14. We saw Samuel giving Saul. Can you imagine talking to the king.
- Like this by the way. You have acted foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God. Which he commanded you. And the promise there. The Lord has sought for himself a man.
- After his own heart. And the Lord has appointed him ruler. Over his people. Because you've not kept. What the Lord commanded you. So what we saw. And in our study last time.
- [ 4 : 14 ] Is God has said. Saul because you did this thing. What thing? Well he offered sacrifices. He offered sacrifices that was not. He was not eligible to offer. And you did this thing.
- And God said. Well that's it. Your kingdom isn't going to endure. You know. Saul could have had a dynasty that lasted. And we've seen Jonathan. Who. His son Jonathan. Who by all accounts was an awesome guy.
- He would have made a great king. You know. He was brave. He was inspirational. The way that he inspired his shield bearer. He was a godly man. He was powerful.
- And yet with all of those qualities. He's also humble. Saul. And we'll see his humility as we go. Actually. In the way that he defers to David. But because of Saul. That's not going to happen.
- It will not be. So. As we cover through chapter 15 today. There's. There's three key points. Three key themes that came out for me.
- [ 5 : 13 ] That we're going to look at one by one. The first one. Is that we've got to face this very difficult subject. Of God. Commanding. The deaths of the Amalekites. Men. Women. Children.
- Infants. We've got to face it. So I'll share you. With you. My thoughts. On understanding. And how we should look at that. Secondly. We're going to talk about the danger of self-deception.
- We're going to see. Saul. Disobey God. And then stand up before Samuel. And say. I did obey God. And you're like. No you didn't.
- What's. What's going on with the sheep and the cows. I can hear them. And. And thinking. How is it that Saul. He's deceived himself. And that's a dangerous thing. So we'll talk about that. And then the final point.
- Is this. Major theme. That covers the whole chapter. The theme of God's. Repentance. God can. Change his mind. And we'll see in this chapter. It will. The chapter will affirm.
- [ 6 : 08 ] Yes. God relented. God. God. The King James says. God repented. Of making Saul king. And then right in the middle of the chapter. We read. God doesn't change his mind. God isn't.
- God doesn't repent. And then right at the end. God relented. From Saul being king. Hang on. What? So that's a big theme. And we're going to cover that off today. And we're going to do all of that.
- In 45 minutes. Give or take. challenge. Well here we go then. Verse 1 of 1 Samuel.
- And chapter 15. Then Samuel said to Saul. The Lord sent me to anoint you as king over his people. Over Israel. Now therefore listen to the words of the Lord.

This is what the Lord of armies says. I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel. In that he obstructed him on the way while he was coming up from Egypt.

[ 7 : 03 ] Now go and strike Amalek. And completely destroy everything that he has. And do not spare him. But put to death both man and woman. Child and infant.

Ox and sheep. Camel and donkey. Samuel has some orders for Saul. And again. We observe this very interesting dynamic where King Saul.

The sovereign of the nation. Is taking orders from the prophet and the judge. Samuel. Very very interesting I think. And of course the authority derives from God.

The Lord of armies as he's called here. God of angel armies. And God says it's time to punish Amalek. Who's that?

Well if you want to do a bit of background reading in Genesis 36. Starting in verse 9. Then you will discover that Amalek was the grandson of Esau. Esau of course being the brother of Jacob.

[ 8 : 05 ] Who was renamed to Israel. And Amalek himself became one of several chiefs. Over the Edomites. The Edomites being the people of Esau.

Now we've just read that this punishment is being meted out. Because Amalek opposed Israel. During the Exodus. And now that story is in Exodus 17.

Verse 8 to 16. And in the interest of time I'll summarize. But Amalek came out to oppose Israel. To fight against them in a place called Rephidim. Joshua.

The young Joshua goes out to fight. And you remember the story. And Moses is up on the mountain. Praying with his hands lifted high. And Aaron and Hur are there as the battle wages on.

They're holding up his arms to help him continue. And thus is Amalek defeated. A brief story showing how prayer is key to victory in battle.

[ 9 : 02 ] But the key bit there is in verse 14 of chapter 17 in Exodus. And reading from there we read this. Then the Lord said to Moses. Write this in a book as a memorial.

And recite it to Joshua. That I will utterly wipe out the memory of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar and named it the Lord is my banner.

And he said because the Lord has sworn. The Lord will have war against Amalek. From generation to generation. So that's our background. God himself said write it down.

There's going to be a reckoning. I'm going to wipe Amalek out entirely. He's going to be gone. And then in Deuteronomy 25 verse 17.

Moses reminds the people again. Remember what Amalek did to you on the way. When you came out of Egypt. How he confronted you on the way. And attacked you. It says he attacked among you all the stragglers at your rear.

[ 10 : 02 ] When you were tired and weary. How callous is that? That's what Amalek did. He attacked the stragglers. And then this. And he did not fear God. So it shall come about when the Lord your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies in the land.

Which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance. That you shall wipe out the mention of the name Amalek from under heaven. You must not forget.

Said Moses. Okay. So that's our background. And then as we went through Judges. The Amalekites came up as belligerents against Israel a few times.

And actually. Do you remember when the spies went to the promised land. Before they went in. And there was a bunch of people they saw. And they were like. Oh I'm not going in there. Thank you very much. The Amalekites were among those who were named.

So they were super scary people. And so they were part of the reason Israel wandered 40 years. Now in the very last chapter.

[ 11 : 07 ] If you just look back a few verses. If you're still there in 1 Samuel. Verse 48 of the preceding chapter. Says. Of Saul. He acted valiantly.

And defeated the Amalekites. And saved Israel from the hands of those who plundered them. So as we pick up the story in chapter 15 here. The Amalekites are already weakened.

And God says. Now is the time. To fulfill what I said to do. Wipe them out. Completely destroy them. And I wonder what you think about that command.

It's tough. Right. It's a tough thing to read. God is saying. Wipe them all out. Not just the. You know. The army. And the military men. Wipe them all out.

And. I want to. I want to share with you three things. As I prayed through. And pondered on this. Which I hope. Will be helpful. So the first thing is this.

[ 12 : 03 ] If. If you were to think to yourself. This is unjust. God can't do that. You have an incorrect view of God. That's the first thing. When we started.

The book of 1 Samuel. In chapter 2. We read Hannah's song. And in it. She said this. The Lord. Puts to death. And makes alive. He brings down to Sheol. And brings up.

The Lord. Makes poor and rich. He humbles. He also exalts. And when we studied this. This text. I made the point. That God has. Full authority. Over life and death. God is God.

He is the creator. He is the sustainer. Of the whole universe. If you. Are. Breathing. It's God's breath. In your lungs. And that's true of everybody.

Whether you acknowledge God or not. That is true. That is God. And as such. He has every right. To do. As he pleases. Similarly. Nebuchadnezzar. King Nebuchadnezzar.

[ 13 : 00 ] In Daniel 4. He said that. All. The inhabitants of the earth. Are of no account. But he does according to his will. Among the army of heaven. And among the inhabitants of the earth.

And no one can fend off his hand. Or say to him. What have you done? No one can say to God. What are you doing? No one can say to God. You shouldn't do this. And of course.

Isaiah 45. Is another key text. Verse 9 says. Woe to the one who quarrels with his maker. A piece of pottery. Among the other. Other. Earthenware pottery pieces.

Will the clay. Say to the potter. What are you doing? Or the thing you are making. Say. He has no hands. So. We have to start there.

We have to start there. With the humility to say. God. Can do. What he pleases. With the people that he has made. The fear of the Lord. Is the beginning of wisdom.

[ 13 : 56 ] And if we want wisdom. To understand this. Then we have to come from a place of awe. Of who God is. You know. And there are things. That. If.

If we. If humans did them. It would be wicked and outrageous. Because God has said. Don't do it. But. God is God. And he can do. As he pleases.

He is the master. So we have to start there. Second. You have to realize as well. We must realize. And remember. That every person who has sinned.

Has forsaken their right to life. And has chosen a path. That leads to death. The scriptures say. The soul that sins. Shall die. Full stop.

That's what God said through Ezekiel. And from God's perspective then. There really isn't such a thing. As you know. The right to life. Or human rights. Or any of these things. Because the wages of sin is death.

[ 14 : 52 ] That's what God says. Now. At what point does a person. Accrue enough sin. To be worthy of death. And well. We could ask David about that. And in Psalm 51 verse 5.

He wrote. Behold. I was brought forth in guilt. And in sin. My mother conceived me. At birth then. Says David. Or we could look at Ephesians.

Chapter 2 verse 3. Which says that. Human beings. By nature. Are children of wrath. Children. Ready for wrath. That's. That is what we have.

That's true of all. All of us. All have sinned. And fall short of the glory of God. Says Romans 3. So it gets worse. It gets worse. So. And therefore.

There's no. Nobody can say. That God's command is unjust. Because all have sinned. And all are worthy of God's justice. Now.

[ 15 : 48 ] I hasten to add at this point. That God is merciful. And this. He isn't willing that any should perish. And he wills for everyone to come to repentance. As we read in 2nd Peter 3.9.

The heart of God is to save. John 3.17 says that God. Didn't send his son into the world. To judge the world. But so. That the world. Might be saved. Through him. And this is why.

Although the wages of sin is death. Not everyone is immediately wiped out. It's rare. That God would command this kind of thing. Right. It's very very rare.

That God says. This is what has to happen. But when you reflect on those first two points. The question is. Well actually. Why is anyone spared? Not. Why are these people judged?

You know. God gave the Jews a sacrificial system. So that. Sins could be atoned for. So. Anyway. Third point on this. Is. That.

[ 16 : 44 ] What we're seeing here. Is an example. An example. Of communal judgment. It's. Judgment upon a community. Judgment on a. A collection of people. The Amalekites.

Rather than on. Specific individuals. It's a judgment on Amalek. For what happened. God says. This is now the time. For them to receive the punishment. They're due. And God does this.

Right. Think about the flood. Right. How many. Years. Had there been sin. On the earth. When God said. Right. That's enough. I'm done.

I'll save that family. Because he's righteous in my eyes. Everybody else. Men. Women. Children. Infants. Wiped out. What about Sodom and Gomorrah?

What about. The seal. Bowl. And trumpet judgments. In Revelation. This is. God does do this. But when. When it is time. God does bring down judgment.

[ 17 : 43 ] On groups. In one. Young and old alike. And this is fascinating conversation. In Genesis 18. I'm sure you know it. When. When Abraham says. What if there's.

50 righteous. Is that enough to save the city? And it gets all the way down to 10. And at that point. They stop. And you're like. Is 10 the limit then? Is 10 the limit? But of course in the story. We see.

The angels physically remove. Lot. The implication being. One. Is enough. So when you see these things. We have to realize.

There isn't any in there. Who are. Who are calling on the name of the Lord. There isn't any in there. Who do not. Deserves. This severe judgment. And you know.

It is hard stuff. And I. I remember last time. I read through. The book of Revelation. And I'm reading about. These bowls being poured out. And everyone. All the water being turned into blood.

[ 18 : 36 ] And you're like. Man. The sun. Is scorching people. And you're like. This sucks. And then in verse 5. Of chapter 16. You know. When I was thinking this. I read this.

The angel of the waters. Says. Righteous are you. The one who is and who was. O holy one. Because you judge these things. For they poured out the blood of the saints and prophets.

And you have given them blood to drink. They deserve it. And I heard the altar saying. Yes. Lord God. The almighty. True and righteous. Are your judgments.

I remember just being really blown away by that. That. You know. In the middle of this. You know. Crazy text. That's so hard. These two. The angel of the waters. And the altar. Whoever they are. Step up.

And they say. This is just. I was like. Okay. Okay Lord. And in the end. We have to accept. That God knows. What is right. So.

[ 19 : 30 ] Let's talk about these guys. The Amalekites then. Well. Like the Canaanites. They were. Committed. To abomination. And again. Like the Canaanites.

Each individual. Had opportunity. To walk away. Right. Think about. Rahab. At Jericho. What does she do. She knew it was wrong. And she said.

I know your God is right. I know you're going to come and judge these people. And she joined with. The Jews. And she became part of their. She became. She became Jewish.

I guess. A proselyte. She joined that community. And the Amalekites. Would have had the same opportunity. Those who remained in the land. Were those who were committed.

To the sins. Of their community. So why was it necessary. To completely wipe them out. And well. As I was pondering on that point. I want. And actually.

[ 20 : 26 ] This was confirmed to me. Just yesterday. When I read this article. Anyway. There was a study. In 2020. And it concluded that. Palestinian children.

Are being. Systematically taught. To hate. Jewish Israelis. And violently resist. The Jewish present in Israel. And the report went on. To argue that. Palestinian children.

Are being primed. For a continuous. And long range. Confrontation. Against the state of Israel. And I was like. Yeah. And it's true. Right. And this is. This happened before. October last year. This is.

This is. This is the education. This is what the children. Are being taught. And this is the thing. I read yesterday. Which. Grieved me to the core. Here in the UK. In London. There's a charity.

Called Metroland Cultures. And they ran this workshop. For children. As young as six. Who were making badges. Celebrating. Intifada. Celebrating. Death.

[ 21 : 19 ] And the armed struggle. Against Israel. And I'm like. What are we doing? What are we doing? To our children? What did the Amalekites. Do to their children? I don't know. I don't know.

But God knows. The best and right thing to do. Was. To wipe them out. So we have to trust God. So I hope that's helpful. In some measure.

So. Verse four. Then. Saul summoned the people. And counted them. In Telaim. Two hundred thousand foot soldiers. Ten thousand men of Judah.

And Saul came to the city of Amalek. And set an ambush in the wadi. Which just means a valley. Or stream. But Saul said to the Kenites. Go. Get away.

Go down from among the Amalekites. So that I do not destroy you. Along with. Along with them. For you showed kindness. To all the sons of Israel. When they went up from Egypt. So the Kenites got away.

[ 22 : 15 ] From among the Amalekites. So the Kenites are excused. They are related to. The father-in-law of Moses. Jethro actually. And in contrast to the Amalekites.

He and his. Were a blessing to Israel. You know. Giving Moses counsel. And it's. If you know the story. But we'll move on. So that's the reason for that. Verse 7.

Then Saul. Defeated the Amalekites. From Havilah. Going toward Shur. Which is east of Egypt. He captured Agag. The king of the Amalekites. Alive.

And completely destroyed. All the people. With the edge of the sword. But Saul. And the people. Spared Agag. And the best of the sheep. The oxen. And the more valuable animals. The lambs.

And everything that was good. And were unwilling. To destroy them completely. But everything. Despicable. And weak. That. They completely destroyed. Okay.

[ 23 : 11 ] Havilah to Shur. How far is that? Well. It's a big place. Multiple cities. I read through. The historian. Josephus. Record of this.

And he talked about how. There's multiple cities. And some of them. Saul besieged. Some of them. He scaled the walls. Some of them. He used. Warlike machines. Whatever they are. And this is.

You know. This is Josephus. It may or may not be accurate. But I think the point is. This was a big campaign. That took some time. Probably many months. In which this whole campaign was going on.

And Saul. Destroyed them all. Except for the ones he did not. Which is. A gag. And the best of the animals. So maybe we can say.

95% obedient. Hmm. Not bad. Well. Let's see what God thinks. Of Saul's performance. Verse 10.

[ 24 : 07 ] Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel. Saying. I regret. That I have made Saul king. Because he has turned back. From following me. And has not carried out my commands. And Samuel was furious.

And cried out. To the Lord. All night. So. 95% obedience. Is. Disobedience. God's assessment is.

That he has turned back. From following me. The implication being. He was doing it. And now he's. Turned back. Hasn't done it. And Samuel was furious. He's angry.

I think. I take from that. He's angry that Saul. Who was a man. With so much potential. Whom God installed. As king. Who initially displayed. You know. Pretty good traits.

He displayed humility. And. You know. And zeal for the Lord. Threw it all away. And God says. I regret. I made him king. And again. That will cover that theme.

[ 25 : 03 ] At the end. That's our third big theme. Once we've read all the verses. That touch on it. Partial obedience. There is disobedience. So.

Verse 12. Samuel got up. Early in the morning. To meet Saul. And it was reported to Samuel. Saying. Saul came to Carmel. And behold. He set up a monument to himself.

Isn't that nice. Then turned. And proceeded on to Gilgal. So Samuel came to Saul. And Saul said to him. Blessed are you of the Lord. I have carried out the command of the Lord.

Lord. But Samuel said. What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears. And the bellowing of the oxen. Which I hear. I love it. And Saul said.

Oh. They are. They have brought them from the Amalekites. For the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen. To sacrifice to the Lord. Your God. But the rest. We have completely destroyed.

[ 26 : 01 ] Samuel said to Saul. Stop. Just stop. And let me inform you. Of what the Lord said to me last night. And he said to him.

Speak. So Samuel said. Is it not true. Though you were insignificant in your own eyes. That you became the head. Of the tribes of Israel.

For the Lord anointed you as king over Israel. And the Lord sent you on a mission. And said. Go. And completely destroy the sinners. The Amalekites. And fight against them. Until they are eliminated. Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord?

Instead. You loudly rushed upon the spoils. And did. What was evil in the sight of the Lord. And then Saul said to Samuel. But I did obey the voice of the Lord.

For I went on the mission. Which the Lord sent me. And I have brought Agag king of Amalek. And I have completely destroyed the Amalekites.

[ 26 : 58 ] But the people took some of the spoils. The sheep and oxen. The choices of the things. Designated for destruction. To sacrifice to the Lord your God. At Gilgal. Well.

Obviously the tone of voice there. Is my own interpretation. But Saul thinks he has been obedient. And it seems to me he genuinely believes.

He did right. I carried out the command. I did obey the voice of the Lord. And as I pondered on this. It reminded me of another Saul. Saul of Tarsus.

Who of course became Paul the Apostle. He was a very zealous Jew. And he really believed. He was right with God. And doing the right stuff. Even as he.

Quote. I persecuted this way to the death. Binding and putting both men and women in prisons. Acts 22. Verse 3 and 4. This is another Saul. Who fully believed.

[ 27 : 56 ] That he was doing the will of God. And he could not have been further away. Later to Timothy. He said this. This is 1 Timothy 1.

Verse 13 and 14. He said. Even though I was previously a blasphemer. And a persecutor. And a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy.

Because I acted ignorantly in unbelief. That was Paul's hindsight. Was I was ignorant. Because I didn't believe.

That's it. And I think there's a similar situation here. For our king Saul. He seems to believe in God.

But if you notice. It's the Lord. Your God. He says to Samuel. Twice. And it seems that Saul lacks. Any kind of personal relationship with God. In his unbelief.

[ 28 : 53 ] He is acting in ignorance. You know. When. Imagine. What about this. He. He would. If he had been. Pursuing the Lord. Would he not have read. The Torah.

And he would have seen. What Amalek did. And he would have known. This was the right thing to do. And he would have known. They needed to be wiped out. From the face of the earth. Now. We have seen though.

We did see. The spirit of the Lord. Rush on Saul. A few chapters previous. So that he. He. You know. Did this ecstatic prophecy. As it's known. And we even read this.

In 1 Samuel 10. 9. That the Lord. Changed his heart. Okay. But have we seen him. Have we seen him repent?

Have we really seen him pray. In any. In any measure. I mean. We've seen him. Sort of. Try and seek the Lord. Through the Urim. And the Tumim. But we haven't really seen him pray. And you know.

[ 29 : 50 ] When he was searching for. The lost donkeys. He was ready to give up. And go home. And it was his servant. He said. Hang on. Hang on now. There's a. There's a. There's a man of God. We can go and ask about this. And he's like.

Oh yeah. Okay. I guess we could. He doesn't seem to have. A genuine. Faith. Based relationship. And certainly. At the very best. He's a man of compromise.

Sort of obedience. Type guy. And I thought about it like this. He's a man who's had. A religious experience. But he doesn't follow through.



Ooh. Hmm. He doesn't follow through. With a commitment to repentance. And faithfulness. And obedience. Toward God. And I thought. Wow.

How many people have I just described? Saul has deceived himself. I carried out the command of the Lord. Really. What's this I hear?

[ 30 : 46 ] And the. The evidence of his disobedience. Is right there. Bleating and mooing. And he's like. Oh no. No. I've done it. I've done right. Deception.

Self-deception. And I think this is. You know. Where. Where his. Inner monologue. His inner. Perception of the world. Is telling him. No. No. You're right. Saul. You've done right here.

That's like. If I. If I. Teach you something. That's off. Today. Then. Linda will correct me. First of all. You need to know that. But. Second of all.

You can. You can go away. And find out the truth. You can read the scriptures. You can find out. And Nick. You can say. Jay was wrong. Duh. But if you. Convince yourself. Of something. That is true.

Who's going to correct that? You know. And there's actually. A lot of. Studies into. You know. The biases that we have. Confirmation bias. Where we. We struggle.

[ 31 : 40 ] And we reject evidence. As contrary to what we've already. Deceived ourselves with. What we've already chosen to believe. Very. Very hard. To correct. Self-deception. And then.

And. But we know from Jeremiah 17. Verse 9. That our hearts are what? What is it? Deceitful. In fact. More deceitful. Than anything else. And the heart.

In the Hebrew sense. Is not just. Our. Feelings and emotions. Is actually the inner. Self. The heart is the seat of. Our thoughts. And our decisions as well.

It is the thinking person. Within us. And it's deceptive. Eek. And I wonder if. I can't think of a more.

Heartbreaking example. Of self-deception. Than to think. You are right with God. And doing his will. When the reality. Is far from that. And you are in sin.

[ 32 : 36 ] Saul of Tarsus. Is an example. And God had to intervene. In the most dramatic way. And then I was. Reminded of this text.

In Matthew 7. Verse 22. Many. Jesus says. Many will say to me. On that day. Lord. Lord. Did we not prophesy. In your name. In your name. Cast out demons. And in your name. Perform many miracles.

And then I will declare. To them. I never knew you. They thought. They were right. With God. And then Jesus says. Leave me.

You. Who practice. Lawlessness. So anyway. I hope I have. Underscored the danger. And the remedy. Is. The gospel. Of course it is. It is the gospel.

That reminds us. From Ephesians 2. Right. We are by nature. Children of wrath. We are by nature. Worthy of death. And that. That never ceases. To be true. It's just that the righteousness.

[ 33 : 30 ] Of Christ. Is transferred to us. And the sins that we had. Are counted. As forgiven. By Christ. That's the only way. That's the only way. That we can be counted.

As. As worthy. Of. Of walking with God. And knowing him. And walking with him. Amen. And we have to cling to that.

We have to cling to that. Otherwise. We will go astray. And we will start. Taking ourselves more seriously. And thinking we know your thing. Oh yeah.

And then this. Romans 8. 7. 8. The mind. That is set on the flesh. Is hostile to God. For it does not. Subject itself. To the law of God. Who is not even able. To do so.

And those who are in the flesh. Cannot please God. Okay. But we're Christians. We believe the gospel. We're cured. Well again.

[ 34 : 24 ] We read in. 1 Samuel 10. 9. That Saul. Met Samuel. God changed his heart. And I. I don't honestly know.

What that means. I don't know. I don't know. That we can think of it. In the same way. That we do. With our New Testament. Theology. But certainly. Even with that changed heart.

We see that he is. Vulnerable. To self-deception. And you know. Spoiler alert. It doesn't get much better. For Saul. When he's throwing spears. At King David. And trying to kill him. A really.

Really broken. Unstable man. He becomes. But the church. Is vulnerable. And I can prove it to you. Easily enough. In Revelation 3. With the church. Of Laodicea. And I'm looking at the time.

I'm going to skip reading that. But. You probably know what it says. Right? They are deceived about. That they think. We're rich. We've got everything we need. And Jesus says. No. No you ain't.

[ 35 : 19 ] You are wretched. Miserable. Poor. Blind and naked. It's verse 15 to 18. Revelation 3. The church. That church is deceived. The church can be deceived. So. Two thoughts on what to do.

And. And. They're simple enough. Right? The first one is. We've got to spend time. In the word of God. And we've got to spend time. With the word of God. Namely Jesus. He said of himself. I am the truth.

How do we know what the truth is? It's Jesus. The Bible. Is. Says of itself. It is a light to our feet. And a lamp to our path. And if we have one.

Tool. In our toolkit. Against deception. Whether it's self deception. Or otherwise. It's. The Bible. First. It's the Bible. It's time with God. To help us understand it.

Because again. We need. We need the word of God. And we need the Holy Spirit. And that relational. Relationship. We need that relationship. From the Holy Spirit. To help us understand.

[ 36 : 17 ] What we read. Otherwise. We are vulnerable. And then secondly. I think. Secondly this. We need the wisdom. And counsel of one another. As well. Don't we? You know. It's. It's interesting.

I know this is. Slightly tangential. But Jesus said. Why is it that we. We see this speck. In our brother's eye. And miss the log. In our own eye. And we do. Right. We. We do more easily see.

How another. Needs a bit of correction. Than we do in ourselves. And. This is. Great phrase. That happened. That you can read twice. Romans 12.

5. And Ephesians 4. 25. And it says. In the ESV version. That we are. The church is. Members of one another. And I love that.

I love that. I love the thought. That we are. Members of one another. You know. It's almost like. We. We succeed together. We grow together. We're one body. I love it.

[ 37 : 09 ] Proverbs 15. 22. Says that. Without consultation. Plans. Are frustrated. But with many. Counselors. They succeed. We need to share. Our lives.

Together. We need to share. What we're thinking. And allow one another. To pour in. So. Let's go back to the text. Saul's argued. I did obey the voice of the Lord.

And he says. I brought them to sacrifice. Okay. Great. Verse 22. Samuel said. Does the Lord. Have as much delight. In burnt offerings.

And sacrifices. As in obeying. The voice of the Lord. Behold. To obey. Is better than a sacrifice. And to pay attention. Is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion.

Is as reprehensible. As the sin. Of divination. And insubordination. Is as reprehensible. As false religion. And idolatry. Since you have rejected. The word of the Lord.

[ 38 : 03 ] He. Has. Also rejected you. From being king. And I thought on this. You know. Sacrifice. Or obedience. And I just.

I imagined in my head. Someone going out. And robbing a bank. And then taking 10% of his earnings. And tithing it. Is God pleased with that sacrifice? I don't think so.

And just think for a moment. Why even are there sacrifices. And offerings. Well it's to deal with sin. It's to deal with sin. God. It's not the case.

That God. Loves bloodshed. And it's like. I want some people. Who are going to shed blood for me. So I'll make humans. To shed blood. No. No.

God created humans. To live in relationship with him. He wanted us. To love him. To be obedient to him. To walk with him. And have an awesome relationship. And we fail.

[ 39 : 01 ] And in his mercy. God provided. A medium. For forgiveness. And it's called sacrifice. Obedience is always.

Preferable. To sacrifice. Of course it is. And again. They always point forward. To that perfect sacrifice. Of Christ Jesus. To finally deal with sin. When you think about it.

It's obvious. Right. Of course God prefers. Obedience. And then we have this little. Poetic couplet. Where we read that. Rebellion is as divination.

Or witchcraft. Is another word for that. Insubordination. It's a tricky word to translate there. Could be. Presumption. It could be. Arrogance. Literally it's a word that means.

Pushing back. God. Pushing back. That is. Idolatry. False religion. And idolatry. Interesting isn't it.

[ 39 : 58 ] Divination is using occult means. To try and discern the future. Or. Or to make decisions about what to do. Rebellion is like that. Says. Samuel. Why. Why is rebellion like that?

Well. Because God is the only one. Who can. Who can tell the future. And this is going to be a key thing. For us to bear in mind. When we. Don't run out of time. And face into the last point. Well. In Isaiah 46.

Verse 9 through 10. God says through the prophet. He says. Remember the former things. Long past. For I am God. And there is no other. I am God. And there is no one like me.

Declaring the end. From the beginning. And from ancient times. Things which have not been done. Saying. My plan will be established. And I will accomplish. All. My good pleasure.

So. You see. God says. There is no one like me. Who knows the future. It is one of God's. Well. Actually. I think it is fair to say. It is one of his.

[ 40 : 54 ] Authenticating marks. His ability to prophesy. And tell you the future. So. Trying to do that. From some other means. I am going to try and divine the future. From somewhere else.

Rebellion. That is rebellion. Rebelling against God. And turning. To his enemies. And similarly. This insubordination. This. Pushing back.

Against God's command. Did God really say. No. You can do it. Your own way. It is fine. Idolatry. It is. Setting up your own God.

My God wouldn't say that. My God says this. Idolatry. And then we have. Poetic justice. Since you have rejected the word of the Lord.

He has rejected you. From being king. Verse 24. And then Saul said to Samuel. I have sinned. For I have violated the command of the Lord.

[ 41 : 48 ] And your words. Because I feared the people. And listened to their voice. Now then please. Pardon my sin. And return with me. So that I may worship the Lord. But Samuel said to Saul.

I will not return with you. For you have rejected the word of the Lord. And the Lord has rejected you. From being king over Israel. So there it is again. And Samuel turned to go.

But Saul grasped the edge of his robe. And it tore off. And so Samuel said to him. The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today. And has given it to your neighbor.

Who is better than you. Also. Key verse. The glory of Israel. Will not lie. Nor change his mind. For he is not a man. That he would change his mind. Then Saul said.

I have sinned. But please honor me now. Before the elders of my people. And before all Israel. And go back with me. So that I may worship the Lord your God. So Samuel went back following Saul.

[ 42 : 42 ] And Saul worshipped the Lord. So briefly then we see. Well do we see repentance? Would you say this is repentance? Most commentators would argue it is not.

It is insincere. And I think on balance. I agree with that assessment. Why? Well one. Because it only comes after the pronouncement. Bro you blew it.

It is over. You have lost the kingdom. It is like. Oh no no. I will be good. It is kind of like that. It is only after the pronouncement of the consequence. You see that in children.

All the time. No offence Hannah. So that is the first thing. Secondly. If you look at verse 30. Saul's priority seems to be his honor.

And how he looks before man. Oh God please honor me. He's more concerned about reputation than righteousness. And thirdly again. As I've alluded to.

[ 43 : 41 ] If you look at the trajectory of Saul's life. It ain't characteristic of a repentant man. So it's. I don't think it is repentant. But I will. I did want to say this.

If. If he had been. Genuinely repentant. Which he could have been. He could have genuinely repented here. Because he's still breathing. And as long as there is breath in our lungs.

We have the opportunity to repent. To the true God. He would still have faced the consequence. He still lost the kingdom. Even if he'd repented. You know.

The criminal who comes to Christ. Still has to serve their sentence. You get the consequences for your sins. Even as you have the transformation in your heart. So.

I want to. Try and read on and finish this text. And then we'll come back to this last point. What is the time? Oh we've got. Zero minutes left. Amazing. Verse.

[ 44 : 37 ] 32. Then Samuel said. Bring me Agag. King of the Amalekites. Then Agag came to him cheerfully. And Agag said. Surely the bitterness of death is gone. But Samuel said.

As your sword has made women childless. So shall your mother be childless. Among women. And Samuel cut Agag to pieces. Before the Lord at Gilgal. Certificate 18.

For violence. Agag is chopped to bits. By the aging Samuel. And Samuel was said of himself. He's getting on a bit. But he can still wield a sword. There are some challenges.

Here in the Hebrew text. The NASB. From which we're reading today. Says he comes cheerfully. Expecting to be spared death. The New English translation.

Or net Bible. And that analyzes the same Hebrew. And puts this. So Agag came to him trembling. Thinking to himself. Surely death is bitter. Interesting isn't it?

[ 45 : 37 ] A very very different interpretation. And that just shows you. It's not clear. What the Hebrew is saying. I don't. I'm not. I can't tell you which is right. Except that the Septuagint. Very very old translation.

From pre-Christ. Interprets it that same way. Agag is expecting. He got leniency from Saul. He's like. I ain't getting that from Samuel. That's not happening.

So anyway. It's a minor point. So. The end of the Amalekites then. Is it? It is not. For the benefit of the recording.

I'm shaking my head. It is not. Saul did not wipe them all out. He only cleared from Havilah. Towards Shur.

If you remember. Samuel said. You were supposed to eliminate them completely. Well this is a paraphrase. But you got distracted. And you loudly rushed on the spoil. And all those delicious looking animals.

[ 46 : 34 ] You got distracted. Didn't you? How do I know that they're not all. Dead. Well it's simple. When we get to chapter 30. We're going to read that the Amalekites.

Capture Ziklag from David. That was easy enough. Right? And in 2 Samuel 1. A certain person. Is going to take credit.

For the death of Saul. An Amalekite. They're not dead. They are not wiped out yet. Ah. But God said that they were going to be wiped out. Fear not.

1 Chronicles 4. Verse 42 to 43. States. In the days of King Hezekiah. So a little way yet. The sons of Simeon will finally wipe out the remnants of the Amalekites.

So they do. It does happen. God's word is fulfilled. But it's not here. It's in the days of Hezekiah. And as a piece of Bible trivia. There is one Haman.

[ 47 : 32 ] The Agagite. In the book of Esther. If 1 Chronicles 4 is correct. It's the word of God. So it kind of has to be. That can't be a descendant of King Agag. And it's not required in the language.

Anyway. That's for free. I won't dwell on that. Because we need to get to this last bit. So Samuel went to Ramah. Saul went up to his house in Gibeah of Saul. And Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death.

Though Samuel mourned for Saul. And the Lord regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel. And I thought that was quite sad. You know. That these two men.

Samuel and Saul. Whose lives were so closely intertwined. So they become estranged. And Samuel mourns for Saul. But they are not reconciled. And sometimes reconciliation.

It just can't happen. But. Here is our last point then. And we're doing this. I know we're over time. But we're doing this. Can the Lord regret?

[ 48 : 35 ] Well we've just read it. And the answer is yes he can. And no he can't. What? What? What? So as a reminder. Right. Verse 11 said.

God speaking. I regret that I have made Saul king. Verse 29. The glory of Israel will not lie nor change his mind. For he's not a man that he would change his mind.

Verse 35. The Lord regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel. And less used to say. Oh maybe they're different words. No no no. It is the Hebrew verb.

Naham. Naham. So we read. In all those verses. That God. Naham. If you like. That he'd made Saul king.

In the middle. Samuel delivers this very clear theological point. The glory of Israel. Will not lie. Nor will he. Naham. And then at the end. The Lord. Naham.

- [ 49 : 30 ] Naham. So we have a contradiction. Well. No we don't. Okay. But let's understand it. The word Naham.
- Originally carried the meaning of. Sort of breathing deeply. In the sense of a. A visible. Outworking display. One's. Emotion.
- So typically then. That would connote. Grief. Or sorrow. Or even comfort actually. And the word Noach. For comfort. Comes from the same root. And I think.
- So in our context here. We should understand this word. As meaning. Changing. Plans. Changing. Approach. Changing. Tactic. If you like. I'm changing my plans.
- About making Saul king. God doesn't lie. Nor does God change his plans. The Lord changes his plans. Regarding. Making. That doesn't really help. Has it. Hasn't helped at all. So we still have.
- [ 50 : 27 ] What appears to be. A contradiction. And the answer to this. Paradox. Is it depends on your point of view. It depends on your perspective.
- Whether we should say. God. Changed his view. Sorry. God changed his plans. Or. God's plans are fixed. And it depends on whether you're looking. From a human perspective.
- Or whether you're looking. From an eternal perspective. Because from a human perspective. It does appear. That God's plans. Change. In response. To. Human.
- Behaviour. And I can cite. Many examples. The book of Jonah. God says. I'm going to total that city. Jonah.
- You need to get over there. And tell them. 40 days. And it's going to be overthrown. And the king. Pronounces a fast. And he says. Who knows. Maybe God will turn. And.
- [ 51 : 22 ] Nacham. And he does. He does. How do we understand it? It's simple. God always wanted to have.
- Compassion on Nineveh. And he knew the best way. To lead them to repentance. And it was to send the prophet Jonah. And deliver this message. But I think. You know.
- And there are a number of examples. But I want you to consider this one. As the most significant. And that is of Messiah coming to Israel. Hey. Messiah is coming to Israel.
- Daniel chapter nine. Seventy weeks. He's coming. All the Christmas prophecies. Messiah is coming. Hey. Mary. Says Gabriel. Your son. Is going to be great.
- And he's going to sit. On the throne of his father. David. That's the plan. That's the promise. The kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is with you. Says Jesus. The miracles are done.
- [ 52 : 16 ] We've read about them in Matthew. The lepers are cleansed. The. The blind are healed. And they rejected him. And they crucified him. And Jesus said this.
- In Matthew 23. Verse 37. Jerusalem. Jerusalem. Jerusalem. Who kills the prophets. And stones those who have been sent to her. How often I wanted to gather your children together. The way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings.
- And you. Were. Unwilling. There's been a change of plan. Behold. Your house is being left to you desolate. For I say to you. From now on.
- You will not see me until you say. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. And as a result of that rejection. We are now in this interval. That we call. The church age. I'm pretty glad about that.
- And Paul said in Acts 13. Verse 46. It was necessary. That the word of God be spoken to you first. Since you repudiate it. And consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life.
- [ 53 : 14 ] Behold. We are turning to the Gentiles. So I ask you. Did God's plans change? No.

He always wanted to save the Gentiles. Of course he did. That is the eternal perspective. If you take God's perspective. From where he sees the end from the beginning.

He always wanted the church. And he always wanted to save the Gentiles. But then was his invitation to Israel insincere? No. He knew how they would respond.

So the appearance is. Oh God's changed his mind about that I guess. No. He always was going to do it this way. And you see it concealed in the Old Testament. So it's a yes. And it's a no.

It's amazing isn't it? In Ephesians verse 4. Chapter 1 verse 4 says that. God chose us in him. Before the foundation of the world. Before Adam sinned.

[ 54 : 12 ] Before any of these things. Our salvation was chosen. Hang on. I hadn't even been born. Much less put my faith in Jesus Christ. Do you see the tension? And for me. That when you understand that from a human perspective.

I've committed my life to Christ. Now I'm saved. God says. From his perspective. Saved from the foundation of the world. Because I knew it. I saw it. The foreknowledge of God.

So. You see. It depends on your perspective. What about Saul? God knew he was going to flunk it. Of course he did. He sees the end from the beginning. So what does he mean when he says.

I repent that I made. From a human perspective. He's out. I'm taking him out. I'm taking him out of the game. I put him in. As an object lesson to you guys.

This is my interpretation by the way. The scriptures don't say why. The scriptures just say. He was put in. He failed miserably. And God took him out of the game. But what he becomes then.

[ 55 : 10 ] Is an object lesson to Israel. Hey. Saul. He looked pretty good. Right? Head and shoulders. Valiant man. He was awesome. He's the best of all of y'all. And he failed.

There's a lesson there. There's a lesson there. And we'll see that lesson. Next month. When we look at David. And God will say. You look on the outside.

I look on the heart. Well. I hope that's helpful. Lots of stuff there. I'm going to. I'm going to close in prayer. Thank you Lord.

Praise you God. Lord. We've covered some meaty things. Today. And I pray Lord God. That this has been a helpful study. I pray Lord. That your word. Has. Has blessed.

The people. I pray Lord God. That you have confirmed that which is true. And I pray anything. That I've said that is untrue. Lord. You would just. Just cast it aside. Cause us to forget. And. Well. Linda will remind me. I know. And I praise you.

[ 56 : 09 ] Linda. Lord. But Lord. We thank you for your wisdom Lord. We thank you for your eternal perspective. Lord. We praise you. That you are righteous in every dealing. Even when we look at it and go.

I don't know. I don't know how. You could. You could do that. Lord. You are just. And you are righteous. In all your ways. Everything you've done. Is just and pure.

Holy. Holy God. Are you. Lord. This is true. We worship you. We praise you. We ask you to be with us. This week. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Bless you guys.