



Life Group Study Notes

“What One Man Wastes, Another Man Treasures”

Ps. Kore Bendix - May 29, 2016

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- Have you ever accidentally thrown something valuable away? What happened?
- Have you ever found something valuable? What happened?
- What is your favorite kind of jewelry? Why?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org

In the time of the prophet Samuel Israel had turned in their hearts from full devotion to God and trust in him. They no longer wanted to depend on God as their king, but wanted a king from their own people like the nations around them. Samuel, the prophet, was distraught and asked God for direction. God responded by granting Israel's wish, and directed Samuel to appoint Saul of the tribe of Benjamin to be their king, for Saul was the kind of man Israel wanted: tall, handsome, with an appearance of strength. But Saul was an insecure man, who often resorted to control instead of trusting in God.

1 Samuel 13:22-14:3 ESV

So on the day of the battle there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people with Saul and Jonathan, but Saul and Jonathan his son had them. And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmash.

One day Jonathan the son of Saul said to the young man who carried his armor, "Come, let us go over to the Philistine garrison on the other side." But he did not tell his father. Saul was staying in the outskirts of Gibeah in the pomegranate cave at Migron. The people who were with him were about six hundred men, including Ahijah the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, son of Phinehas, son of Eli, the priest of the Lord in Shiloh, wearing an ephod. And the people did not know that Jonathan had gone.

Saul, who should have been leading the people, fulfilling his responsibility and his calling from God, was instead paralyzed. His self-absorption, insecurity, and fear kept him from taking initiative. Saul was intent merely on surviving, when should have put the interests of his people first. He had a sword, but he had no plans to use it.

1 Samuel 14:6-7, 11-15 ESV

Jonathan said to the young man who carried his armor, "Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. It may be that the Lord will work for us, for nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few." And his armor-bearer said to him, "Do all that is in your heart. Do as you wish. Behold, I am with you heart and soul."

So both of them showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines. And the Philistines said, "Look, Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have hidden themselves." And the men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor-bearer and said, "Come up to us, and we will show you a thing." And Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "Come up after me, for the Lord has given them into the hand of Israel." Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, and his armor-bearer after him. And they fell before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer killed them after him. And that first strike, which Jonathan and his armor-bearer made, killed about twenty men within as it were half a furrow's length in an acre of land. And there was a panic in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. The garrison and even the raiders trembled, the earth quaked, and it became a very great panic.

Jonathan was of a different spirit than his father, Saul. He had a relationship with God that gave him confidence. He understood God's purposes and trusted in God's testimonies, which encouraged him to believe God would be willing to work through him. Jonathan was not concerned with self-preservation, but had the interests of both God and his people in mind. His faith and his concern for Israel emboldened him to take action. Instead of sitting on his sword, he used it to make a difference.

In many ways all of us are like Saul, self-absorbed, insecure, and focused on self-preservation. Sin has bred these qualities in every human, while our own sins and sins committed against us fuel them still further. But another One like Jonathan came to our rescue. Jesus is the greater Jonathan who put the interests of the Father above his own personal human interests. Jesus demonstrated the courage and fortitude necessary to take on our greatest enemies; namely, sin and Satan. He conquered them through his death on the cross and routed them on our behalf through his resurrection and ascension to heaven, providing for our forgiveness and making possible our salvation.

It is to Jesus we owe our gratitude and our very lives. He alone is the one who delivers us and sets us free from sin and its consequences, including death and judgment. And he calls us to know him, love him, and walk with him, so that he might transform us to emulate his very character. Through our knowledge of him and his purposes and promises, we too can give our lives to make a difference in a world wracked by the devastating consequences of sin. We too should use whatever "sword" we have to serve God and advance his kingdom. Through a relationship with him in the context of spiritual community, we can discover how to use the "swords" he has providentially given us.

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related point for discussion.

- Do you find yourself living life more out of self-interest and self-preservation or out of concern for God, his purposes, and his people?
- Do you have a "sword" that could make a difference in this world that is either being neglected or under-utilized?
- How do you want your life to make a difference for God's kingdom in this world over the next ten years?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Ask God to turn your heart to see and value his kingdom above every other good.
- Ask God to open your eyes to see a significant need in the world around you, and help you know how to take action to meet that need.
- Ask God to guide you into relationships that will be mutually beneficial to spurring one another on to advance God's kingdom in a tangible way.