

A Man After God's Own Heart – 1 Samuel

1 Samuel 23:1-29

"God is our Provider" – September 17th, 2017



Introduction

Storms, trials, and hardships *will* come in life. In fact, as the New Testament makes clear, part of deciding to follow Christ is counting the cost because as the world persecuted Jesus, so too will the world persecute His followers (see [Luke 14:25-33](#), [John 15:18-27](#)). Jesus tells us this *beforehand*, not to discourage us but to prepare us (see [John 16:1-4](#)). In that sense, these warnings are a loving 'head-up' so that we can be equipped, prepared, and stocked up to not just survive the storms of hardship, but thrive. As we turn to 1 Samuel 23, David is still on the run from King Saul who is trying to kill him out of a jealous paranoia. What we'll find is God's comfort through His provision: in His word, in His people, and His providence. Those same resources are available to us today as we weather the storms because God is unchanging.

Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response.

Sermon Outline

- I. The comfort of God's Word (23:1-13)
 - a. To overcome fear (23:1-5)
 - b. To guide our path (23:6-13)
- II. The comfort of God's people (23:14-18)
- III. The comfort of God's providence (23:19-29)

Read & Discuss

- 1) Read [1 Samuel 23:1-13](#)

Our trust in God isn't a 'feeling' that everything is going to work out for the best. It's a conviction arising from God's word, a confidence in promises. David and his men are learning this lesson in the wilderness as God equips and guides them with His word. When David's men are paralyzed by fear about taking on the Philistines to help Keilah, it's God's promise that makes the difference. We may not have the ephod today, but the Christian has something better: the whole counsel of God's word. In Ephesians 6, Paul refers to the Bible as the sword of the Spirit. His point is that to overcome fear, God's word is our weapon to combat the lies of our flesh, the world, and the devil. What promise of God (either of His character or what He's promised to do for His children) do you struggle to believe? Why? We may have to take up His word over and over in order to combat fear, but as God promises, when we resist, the devil flees ([James 4:7](#)).

Not only does God's word help us to overcome fear, it is a lamp unto our path. God uses His word to guide us and help us in our moment to moment decision making. In his book,

[Discovering God's Will](#), Sinclair Ferguson offers four helpful steps in biblical decision-making:

- I. We should ask what the Bible prohibits or commands.
- II. Christians should consider what options are wise and beneficial according to biblical principles.
- III. Christians should ask what effect a given choice or decision is likely to have on others. Is it loving?
- IV. Christians should compare their proposed action with a biblical example or illustration.

What are ways you can grow in your knowledge of God's word? Who are examples you can look to in the church for advice?

Additional reading: James 1:22-25, Psalm 56

*Other books helpful in thinking about God's will are [Knowing God](#) [chapter 20] by J.I. Packer, and [Just Do Something](#) by Kevin DeYoung. These resources are available at our church's bookstall.

2) Read [1 Samuel 23:14-18](#)

David's hand, or power, had become weak after enduring relentless attacks, being on the run, and facing the emotional turmoil of all that was going on. To strengthen his faith, God provided Jonathan, to remind him about God's promises and minister to him with his presence. Who has been a Jonathan to you over the years? Who can you be a Jonathan to? To spend time with, listen to, remind of God's promises, and pray with?

Additional reading: Proverbs 27:17, Proverbs 17:17

3) Read [1 Samuel 23:19-29](#)

In this final scene, we have a nail-biter. David's on the run, trapped on 'the rock' and pursued Saul. But in the moment *just* before his destruction, God raises up the Philistines and Saul has to turn back. We see not only that God is sovereign over all things, but that his sovereignty brings comfort to God's people. How does the truth that God is sovereign encourage His children in times of hardship? How can we know that God is not only in control (sovereign), but good? What difference does the gospel make in answering that?

Additional reading: Ephesians 1:11, Psalm 135:6, Proverbs 21:1, Romans 8:28

Prayer of Response

Spend time praying together in response to God's word for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <http://firstbaptistum.com/media.php?pageID=6>