

A Man After God's Own Heart – 1 Samuel

1 Samuel 28:3-25

"The Hopelessness of not Trusting" – November 5th, 2017



Introduction

Ever since Adam and Eve rejected God's good rule and believed the lie that self-rule (being our own god [[Gen. 3:5](#)]) was better, human nature has been driven by the desire to live life *my own way*, for *my own glory*. Back in 1 Samuel 27, David was in trouble with Achish, king of Gath, after he relied on his own plan. 1 Samuel 28 interrupts the story of David and shifts the focus to Saul. He too is in trouble after relying on his own plan. But while we hold our breath and wait to see what happens with David, the narrator shows us the end of one who persists in living his own way instead of God's way. From Saul's tragic end, we have much to learn so that we face a different end and know a better hope.

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. Appreciate the sufficiency of God's Word (28:3-14)
- II. Rest in the faithfulness of God (28:15-25)

Read & Discuss

- 1) Read [1 Samuel 28:3-14](#)

When Saul's in trouble, he inquires of God (a good thing!) but God doesn't answer him. The reason for God's silence is not a lack of mercy in God, but a hard heart in Saul. For a long time, God *had* spoken to Saul...but all that time, Saul had pushed against God's word in an effort to live as *he* saw best. When God doesn't give Saul what he wants, he visits a medium in En-dor to get what he wants without having to submit to God. Saul's decision shows that the problem was not God's failure to speak, but Saul's distrust in the sufficiency of God's word. The sufficiency of Scripture means the Bible contains everything we need to know for salvation and godly living – there's no need for further revelation from heaven because something's lacking. What are ways you're tempted to doubt the sufficiency of God's word? Times you are tempted to add to God's word, remove certain things to make it more 'palatable', or update what it's saying to fit your way of thinking? Why is it important for us to believe in the sufficiency of God's word? What difference does it make?

Additional reading: James 4:3-5, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Isaiah 8:19

*On the topic of angels, demons and the devil, one book to check out is Mike McKinley's [Did the devil make me do it? And other questions about Satan, demons and evil spirits.](#)

*To read more on the sufficiency of God's word (and other aspects), check out Kevin DeYoung's [*Taking God At His Word: Why the Bible Is Knowable, Necessary, and Enough, and What That Means for You and Me.*](#)

2) Read [1 Samuel 28:15-25](#)

Saul thought he could find a way around God and still get what he needed from Him. Instead, he found he could neither flee from God's presence or from God's faithfulness. In chapter 15, God made clear that because he had persisted in rejecting God's word, God would reject *him* as Israel's king. Samuel's response in [28:16](#) is telling. In essence, Samuel is asking, why are you asking me advice on a battle plan when your biggest problem is that you're an enemy of God? *That's* what you should be concerned about. Christian...when you consider all the losses, disappointments, or hardships you've experienced this side of heaven, what difference does it make knowing your greatest problem (being an enemy of God [[Rom. 5:10](#)]) is taken care of? How does knowing that in all the trials we face, God is with us, here to help us and walk with us through that time change the way we respond to those trials?

Saul's end is sad because though there was hope of redemption till the very end, his heart had become so hard he'd rather die apart from God rather than humble himself and turn from his sin. Sin, left unchecked in our lives, has a hardening effect in our lives. We skirt one sin under the carpet, call it 'no big deal', but become calloused to it. What once bothered our conscience doesn't anymore until our heart become so hard, it's unresponsive. One help God gives us to fight against sin's hardening effect is other people! Hebrews 3:12–13 says "Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." Who is there to 'exhort' and encourage you today? Who are you exhorting and encouraging in our church to keep them from falling away from the living God?

Additional reading: Psalm 23, Hebrews 13:5-6, Romans 8:18

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.

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