

Read the Whole Bible with Pastor

Monday (June 26) – 1 Samuel 8 and 9

In Deuteronomy 17:14–20 God gave the Israelites various laws for having a king. It was not the king itself that was a problem, but the kind of king they wanted. They wanted a king just like the one the surrounding pagan nations had. When God warned the Israelites through Samuel, they stubbornly refused to heed His admonitions. We are tempted to be conformed to the pattern of the world instead of being faithful to God's Word. Do not give in to the temptation to fit in with the world, but rather be faithful to Christ and His Word.

God in His mercy lets the Israelites have what they want, and we are introduced to Saul in chapter 9, who will become Israel's first king. Saul is of humble origins, being of the least of the tribes of Israel and of the least of the clans of Israel. What is lowly in the world God exalts, and He gives grace to the humble. We too humble ourselves before God, knowing that in Christ He gives us grace and exalts us to life eternal with Him.

Tuesday (June 27) – 1 Samuel 10 and 11

In chapter 10 Samuel anoints Saul privately as the first king of Israel. This was meant to help prepare him for when he would be publicly declared to be king. The pouring on of the oil is symbolic of the gift of the Holy Spirit. God gave Saul the gift of the Holy Spirit and also a new heart (vs. 9) to help him fulfill his office. The title "Christ" means "anointed one." Jesus was anointed to be our prophet, priest, and king when the Holy Spirit came upon Him in His baptism at the Jordan River. Samuel also gave Saul specific physical signs of what would happen to him afterwards. The purpose of these physical signs was to give Saul certainty with regard to God's promises. In the same way, God gives us the physical signs of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which give us the forgiveness of sins along with certainty of our salvation in Christ our anointed King.

Chapter 11 is the first test of Saul's kingship. Saul trusted in God, and God used him to deliver the Israelites in the city of Jabesh-gilead from the Ammonites. In verse 6 it says the Holy Spirit rushed upon Saul. This was a special gift of courage for Saul in his office as king. Similarly Jesus gave the Apostles the Holy Spirit in John 20 to help them in their office as preachers. After successfully defeating the Ammonites, some of the Israelites wanted to kill those who despised Saul. Like Christ, Saul instead turns the other cheek and refuses revenge. He does this because he has a new heart and spirit given to him by Christ.

Wednesday (June 28) – 1 Samuel 12

This is Samuel's farewell sermon in which he ceases to act as a political leader (judge) for Israel, although he will still be a prophet of God to the people. First, like the Apostle Paul does in the book of Acts, Samuel demonstrates that he has been a faithful servant and man of God, not using his role as prophet and leader for selfishness. Second, he recounts all that God had done in the past to save them. Lastly, Samuel calls them to repentance and faith in God.

Even though they have sinned, God will not forsake them. They are to remain faithful to God and His Word. God promises us that if we are faithful to the end we too shall be saved.

Thursday (June 29) – 1 Samuel 13

God sends tests of faith to His children in order to draw us closer to Him, but the Devil wants these tests to drive us away from Christ and His Word. Saul is tested in this chapter when Samuel, who being a prophet was authorized to offer sacrifices, does not come at the appointed time. Saul became fearful, along with the rest of the Israelites, and decided to take matters into his own hands. Never take matters in your own hands, trusting in yourself, but rather trust in Christ and follow His Word no matter how dire the situation looks. Saul failed the test. Samuel tries to call Saul to repentance, but Saul instead makes excuses for his sin. Since Saul refused to repent, God tells Saul that He has chosen someone else to be king—not from Saul's line. Whenever we are called to repentance for a sin, we are to confess it without excuses, so we can receive Christ's forgiveness and be restored.

Friday (June 30) – 1 Samuel 14

Jonathan the son of Saul displays courage and wisdom, but his father instead displays foolishness, by making a vow that none of his soldiers were to eat all day. Foolish or rash vows are not to be kept, for they are not pleasing to God. Saul had the priest cast lots, and when it was discovered that Jonathan had broken Saul's oath, the people chose to ransom him instead of letting Saul kill him. Christ our Lord ransoms us from our sinful foolishness with His precious so that we might not experience eternal death.

Saturday (July 1) – 1 Samuel 15

The Lord regrets making Saul king. God is grieved by our sin. Saul refuses to obey God's command to destroy the Amalekites and all their possessions. Instead Saul saves the best of the animals with the excuse of giving them to the Lord for sacrifices. But Samuel tells Saul that obeying God is better than giving Him gifts. You cannot bribe God. God wants you to obey His Word more than give Him gifts to try to cover over your sin. When Saul is confronted by God, he again makes excuses. Saul makes a show of repentance but only to save face in front of the people. May the Holy Spirit lead us to confess our sins truly without pretense.

Sunday (July 2) – 1 Samuel 16

Man looks at outward appearances, but God looks upon the heart. God saw that David had faith in Him, which is more important than outward strength or intelligence. God chose David to be king after Saul. God's choice of David was by His pure grace. God often picks what appears to be lowly and unimportant to use for His own gracious purposes. Since Saul had stopped following God, the Holy Spirit had left him and in its place an evil spirit would come upon him. Saul brings David into his court because music brought temporary relief. But the best medicine that would have given him lasting relief would have been repentance and faith in Christ. Christ and His wounds is what heals your soul (1 Peter 2:24).