

Intro: *Some of the worst mistakes in my Christian life were made when I KNEW what God wanted...and yet chose to try and "Compromise". Instead of simply being obedient and trusting Him, I "negotiated" a middle ground that pleased me and from the OUTSIDE looked kind of like what I knew He wanted. It wasn't obedience. It wasn't of faith. It wasn't sacrificial. KEY: It wasn't obedience from the heart! It was an OUTER form of partial obedience that always led to spiritual disaster.*

That is where we are today in our study of The Promise. Last week we started our Christmas countdown by looking at the Promise. We are following the genealogy and ancestors of Jesus from the time of "The Promise" in Isaiah up to His birth.

Series: The Promise Isaiah 11:1-3 Page 491

"There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, and the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord."

Today I want to look at King David, one of Jesus ancestors...and talk about: Matters of the Heart! You see, that is ALWAYS what God wants! Yet, all too often we fall short. We are more like King Saul...going his own way...and only "tipping his hat" to God when he had to! Because of that God rejected him as King...and David...the Ancestor Of Jesus was chosen.

Matters of The Heart! I Samuel 16:1-

1. God Always Has A Plan, and It Is Usually Different Than Ours! Vs 1

- Samuel is grieving over Saul being rejected as king of Israel
~Saul was never God's plan in the first place! Ch 8 People insisted, REJECTED God's plan...made their own
~Saul was anointed "leader!" not king! People made him KING...God allowed him...NEVER anointed him as king
- God tells Samuel, It's OK, I have a King! Now that the people have learned "the hard way!" MY CHOICE!
~I have rejected Saul Vs 1: Rejected: Lit = to spurn, to despise, to disdain, to reject, refuse, cast away
~I have chosen David Vs 2: Provided: Lit = to approve, to consider well, to respect before others

Illus: Back in the 70's there was a song going around...*Go ahead and take another lap around Mt. Sinai!*

- God's preference is not always our preference: They picked Saul for all the wrong reasons! 1Sam 9:1-2
Illus: He was like the "bad guy" in the hallmark movie! Tall, Dark, Handsome, Wealthy FATAL FLAW!
- God's preference is ALWAYS BEST!
~Not always EASIEST for us...or PLEASANT...Or what we WANT...but always best for US
~And...it is always best for the Kingdom!

For the purpose that He is trying to accomplish! Much of what King David experienced was difficult...God's plan

Illus: Key: The world doesn't revolve around us!

Thomas Houston in Bible college: Worldview: "Anthropocentric" VS "Theocentric"

God always has a plan...to extend His kingdom...And His plan doesn't always mesh with ours...and we have to learn... What God wants for us...is BETTER than what WE want for us! But like the Israelites...and Samuel...hard lesson

2. God's Plan Usually Includes Sacrifice, Obedience and Faith. Vs 2-6

Because we are so Anthropocentric...thinking everything revolves around us, these three things are always a struggle!

We struggle when we are asked to sacrifice, we struggle when we are called to Obey, and we struggle to have faith!

Those 3 go against everything we are! How we deal with each of those issues says a lot about our relationship with God.

- Samuel: *Struggled...but got there*
~Sacrifice is going to cost me my life...(But that is going to reveal the family of the new king!)
~Obedience: I don't want to go...this is too hard!
~Faith: God says Samuel...Trust me...I know what I am doing...Now I'm working MY Plan!
- Saul: *Struggled...but constantly fell short in every area*
~Sacrifice was never on his radar screen...unless it worked to his advantage! When He Did it...all external: Motions
~Obedience...never willing to simply DO what God said DO! 15:13-16 "What do I hear?"
~Faith: When he was chosen...hiding in the baggage train...Waiting for Samuel...took matters own hands
- David: *Was an example of what it means to walk with God: Not perfect...but Heart was in there....*
~Sacrifice: Gave up his call as King until Saul was gone...Trusted God's timing
~Obedience: Opportunity to Kill Saul...Refused to raise his hand against him... 1 Sam 24:6 "Not lift hand"
~Faith: Goliath, Philistines, story after story of David trusting God as King...

3. God's Plan Always Focuses On The Heart. Vs 7-13

All too often we are just like Saul. We think and act like all God wants from us is the external actions...regardless of heart. Not true! For God, it is always a matter of the heart. Even if the ACTIONS are right...If your heart is wrong...God sees!

- Saul's heart revealed Ch 15

~Saul went to battle

~Direct instructions from God: Don't keep any of the spoils, Destroy everything

~Saul and the people...KEPT the best! Destroyed the rest...15:9

~Saul tried to cover it up...but God spoke to Samuel...and Saul's heart was revealed!

~Samuel communicates a message from the Lord to Saul

15:17-24

- **David's heart revealed: Over and over throughout his reign**

~First, it was partially a result of his home life! (Jesse was one of Elders that came to the sacrifice!) Family of faith!

~Was set on God...not his own agenda 6-8 Don't be fooled...Look at the heart...not the outside!

~Was a heart of trust and obedience (The way he dealt with Goliath, Saul, Brothers, nation...all showed his heart.

~Was not perfect: Know the problem with Bathsheba

~Was set on God 1 Sam 13:14 "A man after God's own heart!"

You see, we have to be very careful not to just make walking with God a matter of checking off the right actions, going through the right motions, doing the right activities. You can do all of those things....and still have your heart far from God.

In the same way, you can have a heart for God, and sometimes make an awful mistake...but...repent...turn to God...and find forgiveness.

CONCL:

KEY: God is ALWAYS in the heart business!

He is just as interested in YOUR heart...and the motivation of your service, as he was David, Samuel and Saul
Just like Samuel, Saul and David, you have to get this RIGHT!

1. How are you doing on trusting God's plan?

2. What does YOUR sacrifice look like?

~Are you caught up in the trap of thinking everything is about you?

~When you sacrifice...Give...offer something to the Lord..what do you give?

~What is convenient? What you don't want? What LOOKS good...but really isn't from the heart?

3. How well do you OBEY?

~Are you like Saul....looking for a way around...out...avoid and keep what you want

~When you obey...do you do it because you have to? To look good...To please others....

Or does it come from the heart?

Maybe today you need what Ez 36 was promised....

*I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.
And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. Ez 36:26-27*

Key to this Ancestor of Jesus...Is the Key to what God is still looking for from us today

~Faith

~Obedience

~Sacrifice

Well, don't you know that in the days of old, When the Israelites didn't do what they were told,

Because of their stubbornness, they failed the test. When they wondered in their faith each time

By their whinin' and their cryin' for a sign, Our Lord, simply told them this....

Go on and take another lap around Mount Sinai, Till you learn your lesson,

Till you stop your whinin' and you quit your rebellin' Till you learn to stand in your day of testin'

By trustin' and obeyin' the Lord.