

Seoul Grace Community
The Life of David: Lessons For a Wounded Life
“The Rejected King”
1 Samuel 15:10-26
May 8, 2016

1. Introduction

a. Context:

- i. David is not King, yet
- ii. The people have begged Samuel to appoint a king.
 1. 1 Samuel 8: 1 When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel. 2 The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. 3 Yet his sons did not walk in his ways but turned aside after gain. They took bribes and perverted justice.4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah 5 and said to him, “Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations.” 6 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” And Samuel prayed to the Lord. 7 And the Lord said to Samuel, “Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. The people got what they wanted and the lord lamented it.
- iii. He tells Samuel that this is an indication of the people not loving God anymore.
- iv. They wanted something to be like everyone around them (1 Sam 8:5) so God obliges them

b. And this passage is about what is really wrong with people these days.

- i. Through the reign of Saul, we learn something of the human condition
- ii. Why do we do bad things, why do we fail to follow the path of God? One answer is in this text.

2. How did Saul fail?

- a. Saul had been given a command of the lord. He refers to it in verse 13.
 - i. Destroy the Amalikites—the Amalikites were brutal and violent—God see that the only way to stop them was by force.
 - ii. But he doesn't allow them to use force the way the Amalikites did.
 1. Every conquering nation does so in order to make themselves richer (more land. more labor.)
 2. But God doesn't allow the Israelites to act this way—they're not allowed to profit by this war in any way!
 - iii. But Saul adopts the methodology of the enemy. He is imperialistic. He takes the best of what they have.
- b. He obeys God as it's convenient for him to do so

3. Why did Saul fail?

- a. This story is fundamentally about a man and his failures.
 - i. Saul had started has a humble honest man hiding during his anointing as king (1 Samuel 9 and 10)
 - ii. He starts to gain power through victories (1 Sam. 14:47-48)
- b. How did he devolve into this brutal king who kept the best parts of the spoils of war for himself??
 - i. He had a large capacity for self deception.
 1. He became someone different but wasn't honest with himself as he started to disobey God's commands
 2. Samuel says why did you not listen to the voice of the lord? Saul says he did in fact listen.
 3. What Samuel is saying that he listened but didn't take heed.
 4. He knew the lords voice at one level but not in his heart.
 5. Saul said he had followed the commands and listened. But he hadn't heard truly
 6. He didn't act on the command properly but rather in his own interest.

- 7. Similar to why Paul says he does not do the good he ought to (Romans 7)—he knows the truth but doesn't act on it, instead he does the opposite
 - ii. Saul immediately defends himself by claiming right away that he had fulfilled the command from God (Then he blame shifts to the others)
- c. Saul even admits that he sinned.
 - i. God doesn't accept this repentance why? He's not sorry for the son but only the consequences. He's sorry he got caught.

4. How do we avoid this failing?

- a. We have to get to the heart of why we tell ourselves not the truth. Why do we put up a presentation of ourselves and can't admit our flaws?
- b. Samuel reminds Saul that he was small and God made him big. But now he's trying to make himself big.
- c. Saul is hiding, covering up and trying to present an image of himself which isn't true—because his self-image is based in the fear of others (perhaps reputation, affirmation, etc.—we're not entirely sure, but as the king he expresses a fear of others as the reason he decide to defy God's plan)
- d. It's painful to have others see us for who we really are, so, like Saul, it's much easier to cover and deceive others (as well as ourselves)
 - 1. Sartre *Being and Nothingness*: "What I apprehend immediately when I hear the branches crackling behind me is not that there is someone there; it is that I am vulnerable, that I have a body which can be hurt, that I occupy a place and that I can not in any case escape from the space in which I am without defense—in short, that I am seen. Thus the look is first an intermediary which refers from me to myself. What is the nature of this intermediary? What does being seen mean for me? I see myself because somebody sees me. Now, shame, as we noted at the beginning of this chapter, is shame of self; it is the recognition of the fact that I am indeed that object which the Other is looking at and judging. I can be ashamed only as my freedom escapes me in order to become a given object. I grasp the Other's look at the very center of my act as the solidification and alienation of my own possibilities. In fear or in anxious or prudent anticipation, I perceive that these possibilities which I am and which are the condition of my transcendence are given also to another, given as about to be transcended in turn by his own possibilities. The Other as a look is only that—my transcendence transcended.
 - ii. Summary: we have no problem looking at the keyhole of others but we hate the idea that others can see the real us---Our "transcendence is transcended" we are made finite and fallible, so we cover and lie
- e. The answer to this?
 - 1. Samuel reminds Saul that he was "small" before but God appointed him to be king—yet now it's Saul who is going around building monuments in his own honor—he's trying to make himself big!
 - ii. We stop then making ourselves big in our own eyes.
 - iii. God didn't choose Saul because he was big—it was only by grace that he was chosen.
 - iv. Samuel reminds Saul of this on a personal level. He reminds him of the principle of grace.
 - v. And we get the person.
 - 1. Jesus became small. Though he was great.
 - 2. He became small so that we might be big again—we can stop lying to ourselves because now we know that he knows us and accepts us---no more covering up from other people!!!
 - 3. Sin is deceitful and we need to give others the license to come into our lives and speak truth so we don't keep deceiving ourselves.
 - 4. Then we can come to God without the masks—not trying to make ourselves big—Not building "monuments" to make ourselves feel valuable