

Rejected by God

1st Samuel 13

The Lord of life, the Creator--God Himself, once said something very sobering. He said that the day of our death is better than the day of our birth (Ecclesiastes 7:1-2). Why would He tell us that? Because at the end, after the life is finished, the real person is known. That life with all of its opportunities and obstacles, accomplishments and failures is ready for review.

The chilling fact of God's Word is the individual life analysis that God Himself then performs—an autopsy not of the cause of death, but of the purpose of life. That is why the constant theme of Paul's exhortations to us in the church revolve around the idea of finishing well at the finish line, a life that survive the fires of the judgment seat, and a 'well done good and faithful servant' analysis of our race by the Lord Himself.

So we will get the consequences of our choices in Heaven. There is a reckoning day for believers. So we do need to have regular investment reviews to think of what we are living for.

That brings us back again to the life of King Saul. The ominous warning of Saul's life is that he had everything going for him possible. He was big, strong, blessed, gifted, chosen, empowered, and given every opportunity to serve God. But he didn't.

Saul failed because there were severe deficiencies in his character.

- God doesn't need brains—*He wants **character**.*
- God doesn't need brawn (huge strong muscles)—*He wants **integrity**.*
- God doesn't need anyone's wisdom, power, or wealth—*He wants **obedience**.*
- God doesn't need ambitious confidence—*He wants **humble dependence**.*

Over and over in God's Word we see that God summarizes an entire life in a few words. The challenge of that summary is two fold. When God summarizes a life *He means it*, and *it is accurate*.

Do you remember God's summary of David's life? We can call that David's epitaph. God distills David's seventy-year life down to just 9 words in English.

*Acts 13:36 "For when **David had served God's purpose in his own generation**, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed.
NIV*

So what was God's summary of Saul's life? God only needs one word—rejected. God says five times in just three verses that Saul rejected God by disregarding His Word, so God rejected him.

The word that God uses for Saul's treatment of God and God's response back to Saul is a very strong word.

The Hebrew word that the Holy Spirit chose to describe Saul's treatment of God is the Hebrew word # 3988 **mawas**, used 76 times in the Old Testament and most often translated despise 25, refuse 9, reject 19, abhor 4, become loathsome 1, melt away. In context when ever this word is used about someone's response to God--it is always bad. This is the word (despised) that described Israel's murmuring in the wilderness just before He sent the plague to kill many of them; this is the word that described Job's boils and sores (loathsome); and this is the word that is used by God for Israel's attitude they (despised) the worship of God the basis for His allowing Israel to be destroyed by her enemies and carried off into captivity.

So Saul rejected God when he used selective, self-serving obedience in place of total and God-honoring obedience. And what did he get as his consequence for that bad choice? Look at the record God left for us.

*1 Samuel 15:23, 26 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because **you have rejected the word of the Lord**, He also has **rejected you** from being king." 26 But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you, for **you have rejected the word of the Lord**, and **the Lord has rejected you** from being king over Israel." NKJV*

*1 Samuel 15:35 And Samuel went no more to see Saul until the day of his death. Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul, and **the Lord regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.** NKJV*

*1 Samuel 16:1 Now the Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing **I have rejected him** from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided Myself a king among his sons." NKJV*

Can you imagine what it would be like to have it all and yet be rejected by God? I can't because I want to obey the Lord. That longing, in spite of failures is the work of grace in our lives. You see David wasn't perfect—just forgiven. Saul wasn't perfect—just unconcerned.

*1 Samuel 13:13-14 And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. **You have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God**, which He commanded you. For now the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. 14 But now your kingdom shall not continue. **The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart**, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you." NKJV*

Which brings us back to Paul's sermon in Acts 13.

Acts 13:22 And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, **'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.'** NKJV

David was imperfect, David was impatient, David was angry at times, wrathful at times, depressed, distressed, fearful, hopeless and tempted—yet he was God's man in that he didn't like being that way and didn't want to stay that way. He was grieved over his sin against God. What God said mattered to David, but it didn't seem to matter to Saul.

Let's experience the start of the fall of Saul. The first record of a problem he had that led to his ultimate disaster.

Please stand with me and follow along as I read 1st Samuel 13.

Now go back with me through this chapter and note the glaring examples God records for us in ways to fail, waste your life. Here is how not to serve the Lord!

Just as the Spirit of God bears fruit, so does the flesh. When we don't obey God we are in rebellion against Him. There is no middle ground. The fruit of the flesh is also quite easily spotted in ungodly attitudes and actions. King Saul would not walk in step with God, so his flesh reigned in his life. Saul lived a life of ignoring the warnings of departure from God's way!

What were those signs? His pathway of rebellion involved the following elements I call **"Ways we Don't Serve God"**! These are still danger signs to caution anyone who loves God, wants to serve Him and seeks to follow the Lord to this day.

We could sum up the tragic shipwrecked life of King Saul by saying that you don't serve God by doing what he did. Why not re-examine his life and see what made Saul the man who wasn't after God's heart. That is the contrast we find when we look at Saul and David side-by-side. (Emphasis added to the verses below.)

1. Neglect God's Leadership of your life so that you underestimate the strength of your enemy—and get completely defeated. 1st Samuel 13.1-7

King Saul faced a whole new type of enemy, he was the King—and he didn't even know how strong his enemies were! The times since Joshua's conquest had produced a whole new type of enemy. Fresh in from the islands of the Mediterranean, the sea peoples settled on the coasts and mixing with the ancient inhabitants became the Philistines. Saul needed God to defeat his enemies. So do we. Saul neglected God's leadership and failed. So will we if we also neglect to allow God to lead our lives.

Fact File on the Philistines:

1. *The Philistine's had a rich ethnic heritage:* They sailed from the Aegean world (Greece) and settled along the coast of Palestine from about 1400-1200 BC; about the time of the Judges in Israel. The Philistines developed a sophisticated culture around a circle of five city states named in the Bible as: Gath, Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, and Ekron.
2. *The Philistine's had excellent logistics:* The five main Philistine city states were located near the Via Maris trade route, which went through the coastal plain or lowlands along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea of Israel. So, the Philistines dominated world trade and greatly influenced other nations.
3. *The Philistine's had massive industrial production:* These powerful European businessmen had an elaborate olive pressing industry. (At Ekron alone archaeologists have found the remains of about 200 installations that could produce more than 1,000 tons or two million pounds of olive oil! Plus the entire infrastructure for what we already learned about last time--their famous for iron making.
4. *The Philistine's had advanced military technology:* From the excavations, the graves, the paintings and etchings comes a historical picture revealing that Philistine soldiers were quite tall, clean shaven, and wore breastplates and small kilts. The soldiers carried small shields, and fought with straight swords and spears—all superior to their enemies as they were made of iron.
5. *The Philistine's had sophisticated artistic skills:* These talented artisans were part of the centuries old Greek culture and continued to create intricate pottery with red and black geometric designs on white backgrounds.
6. *The Philistine's had an evil and dark religion:* Two words sum up the religious traditions of these sea peoples—they were very sophisticated and very immoral. The Philistines engineered and built carefully planned temples. These temples and their gods show up all throughout the Biblical record. There were Philistine temples in the south in Gaza and Ashdod, and in the north at Beth Shean. The Philistine gods also are the constant nemesis of the people of the Living and True God. Dagon, their main god, was thought to be the god of grain. Believed to be his mistress, the goddess Ashtoreth was associated with war and fertility. Baal-Zebul, thought to be Dagon's son, was worshiped at Ekron.¹

So as Israel emerged from the period of the Judges, and picked their first king—he faced these newcomers to the region that had all new weapons that were far stronger than Israel's—unless they would rely upon their true source of power—the Lord God Almighty. Saul was chosen to lead the people to seek God's help and find His victory! The same is true for us each day.

*1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, **seeking whom he may devour.** NKJV*

If you want to waste your life—**neglect God's Leadership of your life so that you underestimate the strength of your enemy—and get completely defeated.** ^{1st} Samuel 13.1-7.

¹ Ray Vander Laan, with Stephen and Amanda Sorenson, *Faith Lessons on the Promised Land Leader's Guide*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999, Pg. 136.

2. **Get impatient and use your impatience as an excuse to do your own thing instead of obeying God. We can't serve God by—Impatience.** *"Then he waited seven days, according to the time set by Samuel. **But Samuel did not come to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him**" (1 Samuel 13:8).*

Saul was impatient with God's plan. He sought the approval of man before he sought the approval of God.

If you want to waste your life—**get impatient and use your impatience as an excuse to do your own thing instead of obeying God. We can't serve God by—Impatience.**

3. **Neglect your primary responsibilities that God has entrusted to you by only taking care of your own needs. We can't serve God by—Neglect.** *"So it came about, on the day of battle, that **there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people** who were with Saul and Jonathan. **But they were found with Saul and Jonathan his son**" (1 Samuel 13:22).*

Saul neglected to provide for those entrusted to his care. He made sure he had what he needed to defend himself, but not that those he cared for were armed for the battle. In the New Testament, God says such a person is worse than an infidel:

"If anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Timothy 5:8).

If you want to waste your life—**neglect your primary responsibilities that God has entrusted to you by only taking care of your own needs. We can't serve God by—Neglect.**

4. **Get so out of touch with the battle raging around you—that God can be doing mighty things, and you miss them completely. We can't serve God by--Lazy indifference.** *"**AND SAUL was sitting** in the outskirts of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which is in Migron. The people who were with him were about six hundred men. Ahijah the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the Lord's priest in Shiloh, was wearing an ephod. **But the people did not know that Jonathan had gone**" (1 Samuel 14:2-3).*

Saul became lazy and indifferent; he was unaware of his son, the battle, and even the victory. He missed it all!

If you want to waste your life—**get so out of touch with the battle raging around you—that God can be doing mighty things, and you miss them completely. We can't serve God by--Lazy indifference.**

5. **Allow your anger and pride to rule so that you say and do things that disable, wound, and harm those around you. We can't serve God by--Rash words.** *"And the men of Israel were distressed that day, for Saul had **placed the people under oath**, saying, 'Cursed is the man who eats any food until evening, before I have taken vengeance on my enemies.' So none of the people tasted food" (1 Samuel 14:24).*

Saul spoke with no thought of what the implications were to his family or nation. Instead of his mouth being a fountain of blessing—he was a curse.

James 1:19-20 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. NKJV

Now look at James 3.

*James 3:5-10 Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See **how great a forest a little fire kindles!** 6 And **the tongue is a fire**, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. 8 But **no man can tame the tongue**. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. 10 Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. **My brethren, these things ought not to be so.** NKJV*

If you want to waste your life—**allow your anger and pride to rule so that you say and do things that disable, wound, and harm those around you. We can't serve God by--Rash words.**

6. **Ignore clear and direct statements about what God wants you to do.** 1 Samuel 15:1-3 Samuel also said to Saul, "The Lord sent me to anoint you king over His people, over Israel. Now therefore, heed the voice of the words of the Lord. 2 Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he ambushed him on the way when he came up from Egypt. 3 Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.' " NKJV

If you want to waste your life—**just ignore clear and direct statements about what God wants you to do.**

7. **Pick and choose from what God clearly tells you to do so that you offer God selective and partial obedience.** 1 Samuel 15:8 He also took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. NKJV

Remember that the clearest way to declare that you love the Lord is by obedience.

- *John 14:21 He who has My commandments **and keeps them**, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.” NKJV*

If you want to waste your life—**just pick and choose from what God clearly tells you to do so that you offer God selective and partial obedience.**

8. **Hold on to the best and nicest parts of what God hates and has asked for you to destroy, and keep them for your own use.** 1 Samuel 15:9a But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fattlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them...NKJV

Jesus told us what He thinks of loving what He hates—

James 4:4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. NKJV

If you want to waste your life—**just hold on to the best and nicest parts of what God hates and has asked for you to destroy, and keep them for your own use.**

9. **Only give God what you don't want anyway and is worthless to you.** 1 Samuel 15:9b ... But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed. NKJV

Jesus told us how to live for eternal gain—

Matthew 16:24-27 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. NKJV

God deserves the first, the best, the costliest of our time, treasures, and talents. If you want to waste your life—**just give God what you don't want anyway and is worthless to you.**

10. **Honor yourself before others and remind people of your accomplishments instead of honoring the Lord.** 1 Samuel 15:12 So when Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul, it was told Samuel, saying, “Saul went to Carmel, and indeed, he set up a monument for himself; and he has gone on around, passed by, and gone down to Gilgal.” NKJV

Jesus' harshest criticisms were for the proud religious leaders.

*Matthew 23: 1-12 Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, 2 saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. 3 Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, **but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.** 4 For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. 5 But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. 6 They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, 7 greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' 8 But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. 9 Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. 10 And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. 11 But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. NKJV*

If you want to waste your life—**just honor yourself before others and remind people of your accomplishments instead of honoring the Lord.**

11. **Be deceptive about the true condition of your spiritual life by making false claims about your dedication to God.** 1 Samuel 15:13 Then Samuel went to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed are you of the Lord! I have performed the commandment of the Lord." NKJV

Jesus honored honesty and condemned hypocrisy.

Luke 18: 9-14 Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' 13 And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." NKJV

If you want to waste your life—**just be deceptive about the true condition of your spiritual life by making false claims about your dedication to God.**

12. **Blame others for your own personal failures.** 1 Samuel 15:15a And Saul said, "**They** have brought them from the Amalekites; **for the people spared** the best of the sheep and the oxen...NKJV

If you want to waste your life—**just blame others for your own personal failures.**

13. **Experience God second hand, only through others, and not first hand and personally.** 1 Samuel 15: 15b “to sacrifice to the Lord your God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.” NKJV

If you want to waste your life—**just experience God second hand, only through others, and not first hand and personally.**

14. **Cultivate an exaggerated view of your own importance.** 1 Samuel 15:17 So Samuel said, “When you were little in your own eyes, were you not head of the tribes of Israel? And did not the Lord anoint you king over Israel? NKJV

If you want to waste your life—**just cultivate an exaggerated view of your own importance.**

15. **Do your own thing even when God's Word tells you explicitly not to.** 1 Samuel 15: 18 Now the Lord sent you on a mission, and said, ‘Go, and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.’ NKJV

If you want to waste your life—**just do your own thing even when God's Word tells you explicitly not to.**

16. **Argue with godly people God sends your way to point out ways that you are disobeying the Lord!** 1 Samuel 15: 20 And Saul said to Samuel, “But I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and gone on the mission on which the Lord sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. NKJV

If you want to waste your life—**just argue with godly people God sends your way to point out ways that you are disobeying the Lord!**

James 4: 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. NKJV

17. **Make sure you only half-repent by making excuses for why you sin, and fearing people more than God!** 1 Samuel 15: 24 Then Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. NKJV

If you want to waste your life—**just make excuses for why you sin, and fear people more than God!**

18. **Choose to save face instead of humbly, contritely repenting when confronted with your sin.** 1 Samuel 15: 30 Then he said, “I have sinned; yet honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the Lord your God.” NKJV

This is admitting not confessing. Here is what a confession looks like: 2 Samuel 12:13 So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die. NKJV And one who really confesses has also really repented and so they can unashamedly sing of God's forgiveness like David does in Psalm 51!

If you want to waste your life—**just choose to save face instead of humbly, contritely repenting when confronted with your sin.**

19. **Forget the awesome power of God so that you begin to think that mere mortals (the Philistines) are greater than the Ancient of Days! We can't serve God by--Doubting the power of God.** *"When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were **dismayed and greatly afraid**" (1 Samuel 17:11).*

2 Timothy 3:5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! NKJV

If you want to waste your life—**forget the awesome power of God so that you begin to think that mere mortals (the Philistines) are greater than the Ancient of Days! We can't serve God by--Doubting the power of God.**

20. **Get so absorbed in your self image that you begin to constantly have to defend your reputation all the time. We can't serve God by--Self-focus.** *"Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, 'They have ascribed to David ten thousands, **and to me they have ascribed only thousands**' " (1 Samuel 18:8).*

Saul measured the worth of his life by what others said, rather than by the Lord.

2 Corinthians 10:18 For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends. NKJV

If you want to waste your life—**get so absorbed in your self image that you begin to constantly have to defend your reputation all the time. We can't serve God by--Self-focus.**

21. **Be so convinced that you are the master of your fate, that you live in constant fears and insecurities about your health, your job, your future. We can't serve God by—Insecurity.**

*"Now what more can he have **but the kingdom?**" (1 Samuel 18:8b).*

Saul surrendered the care of his future security to himself and took it away from the Lord. Fear is always the realm of Satan.

If you want to waste your life—**be so convinced that you are the master of your fate, that you live in constant fears and insecurities about your health, your job, your future. We can't serve God by—Insecurity.**

*2 Timothy 1:7 For **God has not given us a spirit of fear**, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. NKJV*

*1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and **you are not your own?** 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. NKJV*

22. **Look upon others that God is blessing with suspicion and jealousy. We can't serve God by—Jealousy.** *"So **Saul eyed David** from that day forward" (1 Samuel 18:9). **"Now Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, but had departed from Saul"** (1 Samuel 18:12).*

Saul was driven by the lust for self—desiring to keep others from having something he wanted for himself! This is the worst form of jealousy. Jealousy darkens our eyes to anything good about another; in Saul's mind, David was unable to ever measure up to Saul's expectations. Saul neither treasured nor sought God's blessing, favor, presence, or even involvement in his life. He valued himself, neglected God, and feared David because the Lord was with him. What a tragic, misdirected life!

If you want to waste your life—**look upon others that God is blessing with suspicion and jealousy. We can't serve God by—Jealousy.**

23. **Tear down your wife and kids when they don't embrace your self driven agenda. We can't serve God by--neglecting our marriage.** *"Then Saul's anger was aroused against Jonathan, and he said to him, '**You son of a perverse, rebellious woman!** Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of your mother's nakedness?' " (1 Samuel 20:30).*

Saul confessed his failure to nurture and care for his wife. An undisciplined wife breeds many painful days.

If you want to waste your life— **Tear down your wife and kids when they don't embrace your self driven agenda. We can't serve God by--neglecting our marriage.**

24. **Look at life as if it is only for the moment—live only for what you can grab and hold. We can't serve God by--Seeing things entirely from an earthly perspective.** *"For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, you shall not be established, **nor your kingdom.** Now therefore, send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die" (1 Samuel 20:31).*

Saul wasn't able to see the eternal, the divine, and the spiritual parts of life. He looked on his family, his future, and their success as only a physical pursuit, not a spiritual heritage. God was always left out of the equation for security, prosperity, and happiness.

If you want to waste your life—**look at life as if it is only for the moment—live only for what you can grab and hold. We can't serve God by--Seeing things entirely from an earthly perspective.**

25. **Get so calloused about the things of God that you lose all respect and honor for the servants of God. We can't serve God by--Having no fear of God.** *"Then **the king said** to the guards who stood about him, 'Turn and **kill the priests of the Lord**, because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled and did not tell it to me.' But the servants of the king would not lift their hands to strike the priests of the Lord" (1 Samuel 22: 17).*

Saul did not see God, so he did not fear God. Thus there was no limit to his actions because he saw no consequence in offending the Lord by his life.

If you want to waste your life—**get so calloused about the things of God that you lose all respect and honor for the servants of God. We can't serve God by--Having no fear of God.**

26. **Trust in God's enemies and use them to advance your goals. We can't serve God by--supporting the enemies of the Lord.** *"**And the king said to Doeg**, 'You turn and kill the priests!' So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck the priests, and killed on that day eighty-five men who wore a linen ephod" (1 Samuel 22: 18).*

If we love someone, we hurt when they are hurt. We are loyal and reverent of the name of those we cherish. Saul had none of these qualities because he failed to cherish God enough to carry out His fierce wrath against the Amalekites, He uses one of God's enemies (an Edomite) to kill God's choice servants (the Levites).

If you want to waste your life—**trust in God's enemies and use them to advance your goals. We can't serve God by--supporting the enemies of the Lord.**

The end of Saul was a catastrophe. He crashed against the rocks of his own disobedient life and sank into the dark waters of sin. He was a disgrace to himself by his ignominious death; to his family he failed to protect; to his country he betrayed and brought to defeat; and to his God he ignored and dishonored. What a colossal failure and a grim testimony of neglected warning signs that led to a shipwreck of a very promising life!

Saul's failures can serve to drive us to pray to live in such a way that these areas don't

get solidified in the lives of those we love!

Life really does come down to servanthood—who we present ourselves as servants to obey as Paul said (Romans 6:13). Or as Jesus so clearly warns us ‘no one can serve two masters’ (Matthew 6:24).

Now look once more time at the amazingly stark contrast between chapter 15 and chapter 16. Remember—this contrast is intentional. God shows the failure of Saul and flows immediately into the integrity, humility, and obedience of David on purpose. This is one of the most amazing lessons of contrast placed by God before our eyes as a sobering warning and lesson for any who ever claim to serve the Lord. May we see, heed, and respond to this lesson.

Serving the Lord like David did means making godly choices like David made.

1. **David’s unique life was designed by God.** *God uses the unchangeable features of servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16:1-11*
2. **David’s life was disciplined.** *God uses the disciplined lives of servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16:12a*
3. **David’s life was available for God to use.** *God uses the available lives of servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16:12b*
4. **David’s life was empowered by the Lord.** *God uses His Spirit to empower servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16:13*
5. **David’s life was an example of godliness to others.** *God uses the actions of servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16:18*
6. **David’s life displayed true humility.** *God uses humble servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16:19*
7. **David’s life ministered to others.** *God uses the ministry of servants for His Glory! 1 Samuel 16:23*
8. **David wanted to honor God with his work.** *God is glorified by diligent working servants. 1 Samuel 17:1; 34-35*
9. **David wanted to honor God with his habits.** *God is either honored or dishonored by the habits of His servants. 1 Samuel 17:20*
10. **David wanted to honor God with his life.** *God wants us as His servants to give our lives back to Him. 1 Samuel 17:25-26*
11. **David wanted to magnify God’s hand in his life.** *God is honored when His servants remember His Hand in their lives. 1 Samuel 17:36-37*

12. **David wanted to honor God's Name with his mouth.** *God is glorified when we honor His Name. 1 Samuel 17:45-46*
13. **David wanted to dedicate his treasures and trophies to the Lord.** *God is glorified when His servants dedicate their trophies to Him. 1 Samuel 21:9*
14. **David poured his life out as an irrecoverable offering because he believed that God deserved the best.** 2 Samuel 23:15
15. **David wanted to make sacrifices for God because he knew God deserved that which was costly.** 2 Samuel 24:24

So David was God's servant. And his life is recorded as an example to us of how to serve the Lord. In similar fashion, Saul's life was recorded as a warning of how not to serve the Lord!

Let's prayerfully heed the important lessons learned from Saul's shipwrecked life! When we or members of my family face challenges, hardships, and unfair situations, we will live by 1 Peter 3:8-14.

1 Peter 3:8-14 Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; 9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. 10 For "He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. 11 Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. 12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil." 13 And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."
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