

1  **SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE**

1 Samuel 12

2  **ISRAEL ASKS FOR A KING**

- The nation of Israel, seeing themselves surrounded by increasingly powerful foes such as the Philistines and Nahash the Ammonite, asked the prophet/judge Samuel for a king.
- This was after generations of God ruling over his people as their only king, and delivering them by the hand of Judges – local spiritual and military leaders whom God raised up.

3  **SAUL THE KING**

- The man chosen by God – and eventually accepted unanimously by the people of Israel – was Saul.
- Saul was a tall, handsome man who possessed some admirable character traits: He was small in his own eyes and he had a natural talent for leadership.

4  **SAUL VS. THE SERPENT**

- Saul's first test as a leader came when Nahash, king of Ammon, came and besieged Jabesh-Gilead.
- Although the rest of Israel wrung their hands and panicked, Saul kept his head and rallied the nation of Israel into a unified military force.
- He then led them to battle and destroyed the Ammonite army.

5  **SAMUEL'S FAREWELL ADDRESS**

- Today's lesson centers around 1 Samuel 12 and Samuel's farewell address to the people of Israel.
- Although it does not mark the end of Samuel's ministry, this address does mark the end of the period in which Samuel (and thus the judges) is leading Israel.

6  **SAMUEL'S FAREWELL ADDRESS**

- From this point forward, the role of a prophet in Israel would be that of an advisor and proclaimer, not a national leader – that responsibility now fell squarely on the shoulders of the king.
- Samuel addresses the people to talk to them about some of the mistakes they've made in this process, their consequences, and hope for the future.

7  **TOUGH CONVERSATIONS**

- Sometimes it is necessary for us to function as prophets within the Body of Christ – as proclaimers of truth – difficult truth – to our brothers and sisters when they have erred.
- Handled incorrectly or done in the wrong spirit, this can be destructive and divisive.
- Therefore, it is imperative that when we do it that we should do it scripturally.

8  **TOUGH CONVERSATIONS**

- *...so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ... (Eph 4:14-15)*

9  **RECALIBRATE**

- Often, we can get so caught up in the moment – in our own pet doctrines, teachings, success, schemes, or troubles that we lose sight of our priorities and become like a ship, tossed to and fro by the waves, and lose our way.
- We need our brothers and sisters in Christ to point out our blind spots so that we do not become unfruitful witnesses for Christ.

#### 10 **TOUGH CONVERSATIONS**

- *Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil... Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. (Eph 4:25-29)*

#### 11 **NO CORRUPT COMMUNICATION**

- In Ephesians 4, Paul gives some very straightforward guidelines for ALL communication as believers:
  - Always speak the truth
  - Never speak in anger
  - Speech should always build up; never tear down
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#### 12 **SAMUEL'S FAREWELL ADDRESS**

Identifying blind spots

#### 13 **SAMUEL'S FAREWELL ADDRESS**

- Within Samuel's farewell address, we find some important guidelines for effectively having those "difficult conversations" with our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- Usually, lesson on this subject deal with how to accept and evaluate criticism. Today we are focused on the other side of that coin: how to effectively and lovingly help our brothers and sisters identify their blind spots.

#### 14 **1) BE A CREDIBLE MESSENGER**

- *And Samuel said to all Israel, "Behold, I have obeyed your voice in all that you have said to me and have made a king over you. And now, behold, the king walks before you, and I am old and gray; and behold, my sons are with you. I have walked before you from my youth until this day. (1Sa 12:1-2)*

#### 15 **1) BE A CREDIBLE MESSENGER**

- *Here I am; testify against me before the LORD and before his anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Or whose donkey have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? Or from whose hand have I taken a bribe to blind my eyes with it? Testify against me and I will restore it to you." They said, "You have not defrauded us or oppressed us or taken anything from any man's hand." And he said to them, "The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that you have not found anything in my hand." And they said, "He is witness." (1Sa 12:3-5)*

#### 16 **1) BE A CREDIBLE MESSENGER**

- A "credible messenger" is one whose life, experience, and testimony contribute to, rather

than detract from, the message they are trying to communicate.

- Credible messengers have:
  - Consistency
  - Integrity
  - Lack of self-interest

17  **1) BE A CREDIBLE MESSENGER**

- Credible messengers are not necessarily perfect – remember, Samuel had failed in a very important area: fatherhood.
- But he has lived consistently and with integrity in his leadership of the nation of Israel and possesses the necessary credibility to broach the subject about which he is going to speak.

18  **2) DON'T TALK ABOUT YOURSELF**

- *And Samuel said to the people, "The LORD is witness, who appointed Moses and Aaron and brought your fathers up out of the land of Egypt. Now therefore stand still that I may plead with you before the LORD concerning all the righteous deeds of the LORD that he performed for you and for your fathers. (1Sa 12:6-7)*

19  **2) DON'T TALK ABOUT YOURSELF**

- Samuel does not focus on Israel's perceives slight of himself, nor does he build himself up to Israel.
- His focus is not on what he feels or what he has to say, but rather on the "righteousness and deeds of the LORD."
- This should be the rule for all interaction within the church: it ought to be about Jesus.

20  **3) RECALL FOR PERSPECTIVE**

- *When Jacob went into Egypt, and the Egyptians oppressed them, then your fathers cried out to the LORD and the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, who brought your fathers out of Egypt and made them dwell in this place. But they forgot the LORD their God. And he sold them into the hand of Sisera, commander of the army of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab. And they fought against them. (1Sa 12:8-9)*

21  **3) RECALL FOR PERSPECTIVE**

- *And they cried out to the LORD and said, 'We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD and have served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. But now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, that we may serve you.' And the LORD sent Jerubbaal and Barak and Jephthah and Samuel and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and you lived in safety. (1Sa 12:10-11)*

22  **3) RECALL FOR PERSPECTIVE**

- Bringing back shared memories of past victories or defeats can help to shed light and perspective on current actions and blind spots.
- There is another reason it is good to recall: accountability.

23  **4) IDENTIFY THE ROOT**

- *And when you saw that Nahash the king of the Ammonites came against you, you said to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us,' when the LORD your God was your king. (1Sa 12:12)*

- Here, Samuel focuses on the root of the problem: in this case their lack of trust in God.

24  **4) IDENTIFY THE ROOT**

- Often, when confronted with our sin or shortcomings, we want to shift the blame or make excuses for a specific infraction so that we can shift the focus away from the true source of our sin: our pride.
- When having a “tough conversation” with a brother or sister, we need to focus on the root of the problem rather than allowing ourselves to argue over details.

25  **5) ESTABLISH CAUSE AND EFFECT**

- *And now behold the king whom you have chosen, for whom you have asked; behold, the LORD has set a king over you. If you will fear the LORD and serve him and obey his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God, it will be well. (1Sa 12:13-14)*

26  **5) ESTABLISH CAUSE AND EFFECT**

- *But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you and your king. (1Sa 12:15)*
- Samuel very clearly lays out some ground rules: If Israel and their new king will follow God’s commandments, they will prosper; If not, the hand of the Lord will be against them.

27  **6) FALL BACK ON THE WORD OF GOD**

- *Now therefore stand still and see this great thing that the LORD will do before your eyes. Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call upon the LORD, that he may send thunder and rain. And you shall know and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking for yourselves a king." So Samuel called upon the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day, and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel. (1Sa 12:16-18)*

28  **7) OFFER HOPE**

- *And all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, that we may not die, for we have added to all our sins this evil, to ask for ourselves a king." And Samuel said to the people, "Do not be afraid; you have done all this evil. Yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. (1Sa 12:19-20)*

29  **7) OFFER HOPE**

- *And do not turn aside after empty things that cannot profit or deliver, for they are empty. For the LORD will not forsake his people, for his great name's sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you a people for himself. (1Sa 12:21-22)*

30  **8) NEVER STOP PRAYING**

- *Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you, and I will instruct you in the good and the right way. Only fear the LORD and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things he has done for you. But if you still do wickedly, you shall be swept away, both you and your king." (1Sa 12:23-25)*