

Grasping for glory (self glory — the wrong kind of glory)

Summer Series 2022

When we make the thing — whatever that thing is — greater than the King.

Making a big deal about the thing and instead of the King.

Symbols are no substitute for living and loving the person or message they represent. Crosses are pretty but they're only a symbol. And anyone can have a cross in their yard or in front of their church or hang them on their walls at home or even around their neck... but not just anyone can love and live for Jesus. That takes someone who's been transformed by Him and His redeeming grace. It's one thing to wear a cross but it's another thing to deny ourselves and take up our crosses (God's mission and assignment) and follow after Him (Jesus), who gave His life for ours.

In our Summer Series we find that Israel thought if they could get the ark of the covenant (a symbol) to the battlefield, they would surely win the war. But symbols can never replace the presence of the person they represent. They're like shadows... they are powerless. They quickly found out... that their diligent efforts and shouts of hope and confidence in a symbol only leads to misery and defeat. They took matters in their own hands and acted on something that God NEVER established. And we are told that it is God who ESTABLISHES the steps of His champions of truth and grace (Psalm 37:23). Israel went out on a limb of faith, but the problem with they're faith and their limb was that God wasn't in the tree or on the ground to catch them when they failed.

God does NOT value independent initiative. Let me repeat that: God does not value independent initiative (Proverbs 3:5-6). If He ain't behind it, in it and out in front of it... He doesn't like it (Hebrews 11:6-7)! Let me help you with this? Going out on a limb without Him is the mistake of fools. If He doesn't initiate it... you best not initiate it!

He honors faith obedience that overflows from living a life of intimacy with Him. He said we can do **NOTHING** of **ANY** eternal value apart from abiding in Him (Acts 15). Which means, when we are abiding, we are intimately connected to Him and serve Him out love and devotion to Him and not on a whim. If our steps are not rooted in and the result of hearing and believing what He's revealed, our actions, no matter how courageously they are done, are utterly and eternally useless to us and others.

We can either take this seriously and make abiding and hearing from Jesus a priority or be like Israel who already **ESTABLISHED** they were going to do it their way. The consequence was God was silent. He took His hands off and let them do and destroy themselves. We can either have it God's way or our way... but if we choose our own way there is no need to expect that we'll continue to hear from the Lord.

Does this sounds all to familiar? My friends, we don't need another symbol to move or manipulate us but we do need Jesus and the presence and power of the

Holy Spirit. Had Israel come clean... having confessed and repented upon that battlefield, and as a nation, of their waywardness, God would have fought for them. But because every man was doing what was right in his own eyes... they settled for defeat long before they lost the battle with the Philistines because they didn't settle on nor put their confidence in a Deliver who would've set them free.

Shadows and symbols do not hold people accountable, they put no demands on them, they require no responsibility and are only thought of when needed... that's why they're easier to wear or place on a wall than bear on our backs for God's glory.

Can I invite you to think with me for a moment? Let's consider something that applies to all of us? Think about your own journey...

When a ministry is more business minded, and less kingdom minded, it becomes less purpose and people driven and more preference and performance driven.

Who suffers? Everyone!

It's much easier to hurt people, refocus a purpose and abandon core priorities when building a business on preferences and performance alone.

That's not the case when you're a kingdom minded servant, with an agenda, ambassadorship and accountability to faithfully serve and represent your King, as you lovingly and loyally lead His people for Him and to Him.

Now, before you begin to think I'm only referring to established ministries, preachers, pastors and churches I want to be clear that every single new creature in Christ and believing family has been assigned a ministry and mission. How are you operating your ministry? Is it kingdom minded or business minded? Is it purpose and people driven or preference and performance driven? Is it to lovingly

and loyally lead His people for Him and to Him or is it based entirely upon what you prefer, how well they perform and what you can get out of them that will make you and your family feel better about your business minded ministry?

Israel, in Samuel's day, were more business minded... and less kingdom minded. Instead of each man trusting the King, playing their part in the kingdom and looking out for his brother, their preference was that someone do the dirty work for them. They've watched the performance of the world around them and longed to model them... and failed to see their kingdom was different. The result was a business minded ministry where... every man did what was right in their own eyes. "Out with the old and in with the new" became their motto and preference... and performance superseded a kingdom minded purpose. Who suffered? Everyone!

I (God) gave you (Israel) a king in My anger, and took him away in My wrath (Hosea 13:11).

We must be careful what we ask for, God just may give

it to us, yet not cheerfully or delightfully. Israel wanted to be like every other nation so they asked for a king. God gave them Saul out of His anger and took him away in His wrath. 1 Samuel 8

Thanks for joining me today, I'll let you go think about it for yourself... and I pray we all evaluate the kind of ministries we have and the motives and passions that drive us to either serve or be served. Blessings...

#nestingwithjesus #1samuel7 #1samuel8 #ministry
#missions #motives #kingdomminded
#businessminded #purposeandpeople
#preferencesandperformance #preferences
#performance #kingdommindedservants
#fruitonthemind #deborah #barak #jael #sisera #jabin
#judges #giftedforglory #ebenezer #ebenezers
#graspingforselfglory #stonesofremembrance
#remindersofgrace #stonesofhelp
#remindersofHisfaithfulness #graceupongrace
#layersofgrace #mercyuponmercy #summerseries
#summerseries2022 #guidedbyglory #howwallsfall
#psalm83 #psalm106 #itsatrustissue #committedtotell

#strength