

I. Three Pressing Questions

- A. Holy War – how is this right?
- B. Does God repent?
- C. Why would God not forgive Saul (when he forgives others)?
- D. *All three hinge on the wisdom and authority of God being far above ours.*

II. Holy War

- A. The command: leave nothing alive (Deuteronomy 20:16-18; Exodus 17:8-16)
- B. God has the right to do with his creatures what he decides
- C. God seeks his own glory and the blessing of the whole earth, particularly his people

III. God's "Repentance"

- A. God's sorrow over the rebellion of his creatures (see Genesis 6:6)
- B. The "creator-creature distinction" (Ezekiel 18:23; 33:11; 1 Timothy 2:3-4; 2 Peter 3:9; Romans 10:21 with Isaiah 65:2)
- C. God's repentance: turning away from an expressed intention to bless his people because they have rebelled.

IV. Not Forgiving Saul

- A. Samuel "cries to the Lord" all night (v. 10) – but the Lord will not forgive Saul
- B. Why is Saul not forgiven? (see Psalm 51:17)
- C. God cannot leave things as they are
- D. What's at stake?

V. Three Issues for Us

- A. Our holy war
- B. Grieving God (see Luke 19:41-44; Ephesians 4:30; 2 Corinthians 7:10)
- C. Receiving forgiveness (1 John 1:8-9; 2 Peter 3:14b-15a)

VI. What Christ Won: Forgiveness *and* Change

- A. The fool's religion
- B. True forgiveness leads to change
- C. True change is based on forgiveness (Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 2:13)
- D. "I desire obedience rather than sacrifice."