

Long Story Short: The Kingdom

In John 20:31 it says this: 31 *But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

“They are people like us that are born with tremendous God-given potential but also with a propensity for doing the things that are not of God. The story of God is nothing else than the story of a faithful God who pursues unfaithful people. And it is a story about a God who sovereignly uses imperfect people to accomplish his perfect plan. It is part of the mystery.”

God uses crooked sticks to draw straight lines all the time! I love that.

SAUL: Obedience

In 1 Samuel 13, he was facing a battle with the Philistines and the prophet Samuel had told him to wait, not to go to battle until Samuel got there to offer the sacrifice so that we can do this in God's presence. But meanwhile the Philistine army is growing larger and larger and the Israelite army is shrinking and withering. In fact, the Scripture says that they were hiding in holes and in tombs so Saul is understandably starting to freak out a little bit. And the prophet Samuel hadn't showed up yet to make the offering and the sacrifice.

1 Samuel 13:8, NIV: 8 *He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul's men began to scatter.*

Saul decided to take matters into his own hands

Here's what we can learn from Saul: **Obedience is better than Sacrifice.**

DAVID: Humility

Ironically, David responds just like Saul did, but in a different manner. He responded with a desire to restore his relationship with God. Saul responded first by blaming it on others and then with a desire to be honored in front of his peers. David responds with humility, and God's response is crazy - which we will see in 1,000 years - your descendant will sit on the throne of Israel forever.

Here's what we can learn from David's life: **God will elevate us to the position He wants us to have if we will posture ourselves in humility before Him.**

SOLOMON: Worship

Wisdom: Saul was the wisest man to ever walk the earth!

Wealth: Solomon's projected annual income was 25 tons of gold, not including trade....

Which in today's standard is roughly \$875,000,000 A YEAR.

Writings: More prolific than his father David, King Solomon wrote Proverbs, Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes.

Women: 700 wives and 300 concubines. That's how many women Solomon lived with. Unfortunately, this is where Solomon really messed up.

But we miss it. We ALL struggle with idolatry, whether we want to admit it or not. Idolatry is not just going to a pagan temple to worship pagan gods.

What's your idol? God refuses to share his throne with anything or anyone.

REHOBAM: Friends

1 Kings 12:8, NIV: 8 But Rehobam rejected the advice the elders gave him and consulted the young men who had grown up with him and were serving him. 9 He asked them, "What is your advice? How should we answer these people who say to me, 'Lighten the yoke your father put on us'?"

Here's what we learned from Rehobam: **Your friends set your destination!!**

He faced the problem of misguided counsel because he put his trust and his hope in his friends, and because of that, his response to failure was defiance and in that he lost the kingdom.

1. Their success and their failure really didn't have anything to do with their skills or their abilities or opportunities; it had everything to do with their obedience, their humility, their worship, and their friends.
2. God still works despite the weaknesses of people.
3. God uses crooked sticks to draw straight lines all the time.

YOU AREN'T BEYOND BEING USED BY GOD.

Just remember, it has everything to do with our obedience, humility, worship, and the people with whom we surround ourselves.