

## How to Live in Obedience to God 1 Samuel 15

### Introduction:

1. Am I living in obedience to God? Many times we try to dodge this question by listing all the good things that we do for God or for others (I go to church, I sing in the choir, I teach a class, I give to the church, I'm good to my family, etc.).
2. Or, we attempt to excuse areas of disobedience to God by saying things like, "I had good intentions, everybody does that, it wasn't all my fault, it just makes sense, etc."
3. In this chapter, King Saul rebels against the commandment of the Lord. To rebel simply means to disobey God. The first two words of verse 9 reveal that there is going to be a problem. He had God's command. "*But Saul...*"
4. There had already been issues with King Saul, but this was the straw that broke the proverbial camel's back (vs. 10-11). God was through with Saul, and would strip him of his throne and kingdom. Disobedience is a serious thing to God. vs. 23
5. God expects every believer to live in obedience to Him. Last week we learned why rebellion against God is so serious (it grieves God's heart, always affects others, always catches up with us, carries serious consequences).
6. None of us are above a Saul-like fall. From Saul's negative example, this chapter gives us some valuable insight as to how we can live in obedience to God.

### First, accept God's Word as the final authority in your life.

1. As we said earlier, the first two words of verse 9 indicate Saul's problem. Saul decided that he and the people knew what was best. There had already been warning signs in Saul's life. This was a test for Saul to see if he would simply obey God's Word. vs. 1
2. It is amazing how God's perspective and Saul's were totally different.
  - Verse 11 - God said, "*He hath not performed my commandments.*"
  - Verse 13 - Saul said, "*I have performed the commandment of the Lord.*"
3. Saul thought that partial obedience was acceptable (vs. 20), but this clearly is not what God is looking for. God is looking for men and women who will accept His Word as the final authority in their lives and not mix it with human opinion and human reasoning.
  - Saul thought he could **improve** on what God said.
4. There is a real temptation for us to do like Saul and dilute God's Word with our own fleshly thinking. When we do this, we are taking God's Word and placing it on the same level as the words of men.
5. The power of God's Word cannot be released in our lives when we do this.  
**1 Thessalonians 2:13**

## **Second, always stay little in your own eyes.**

1. Saul told Samuel, "I have performed God's commandment." Samuel said, "Then what is that I hear in the distance, Saul? Are those animals I hear?" vs. 14
2. Saul said, "Oh, about that, Samuel. The people thought we could keep back the best ones. Then we could offer sacrifice to God!" vs. 15
3. Samuel said in verse 16, "Saul, do you want to know what God has told me?" Saul said, "Say on." Verse 17 is very insightful. It reveals one of Saul's biggest problems—pride.
  - When Saul was little in his own sight (9:21), God exalted him. James 4:10
  - But when Saul received a position of great privilege and authority, he began to compromise God's Word in favor of his own thoughts and ideas.
4. Let this be a lesson. When we get too puffed up in our own sight, we start thinking that we have the right to bypass God's Word. Our "position" gives us that privilege.
5. When Saul first started out, he looked small and God looked big. But isn't it amazing how the bigger **we** begin to look, the smaller God looks. Saul lost sight of how much he needed God, and this always leads down the road of disobedience and rebellion.
6. One of the greatest potential pitfalls for a believer is worldly, earthly blessing and prosperity. We can begin to think that God's Word applies to everybody but us.
7. We must stay small in our own eyes and realize every day how much we need God. 2 Corinthians 3:5

## **Third, never allow the fear of man to intimidate you.**

1. Saul is in denial this entire chapter. He keeps insisting that he has obeyed God. Finally, when he realizes that Samuel is not going to let him wiggle out of it, notice what he says in verse 24.
2. It appears that the people pressured Saul into this decision and he **allowed** it to happen. Saul said, "*I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.*"
3. Many times in life you are confronted with situations where you have two options:
  - You can fear what others may say or do, and choose to do wrong and disobey God.
  - You can choose to place your trust in the Lord, and do what is right and obey God. Proverbs 29:25
4. Why did Abraham lie about his wife? Why did Isaac lie about his wife? Why did Moses flee to Midian? Why did David have Uriah murdered? Why did Peter deny the Lord? The answer is the same for all—the fear of man. John 12:42-43
5. Are there areas in your life where you have compromised God's Word because you were afraid what your spouse would think, or a co-worker, or a family member, or a boyfriend or girlfriend, or a classmate at school, etc.?
6. Remember, the fear of man brings a snare. Satan is the author of fear and intimidation. "*But whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.*"

7. There are people who will die and spend eternity apart from God, and they will miss heaven because of the fear of man. "If I get saved, what will my husband think? If I get saved what will the people in the church think? If I get saved, my friends may laugh at me."
8. If you are not saved today, don't let anybody keep you from coming to Christ. It doesn't matter what anybody else thinks. All that matters is what God thinks. What a shame it would be to spend eternity with Satan, all because of the fear of man. Obey the gospel today!

**In Conclusion:**

1. All of us must make the choice. Will we live in obedience to God, or will we be like Saul and choose to rebel against God? Saul had a very sad end, but it didn't have to be this way.
2. Obedience is such a key in the Christian life. We used to teach the children a song in children's church about obedience.
3. How can we live a life of obedience?
  - Accept God's Word as the final authority in your life.
  - Always stay true in your own eyes.
  - Never allow the fear of man to intimidate you.