

Theme: When persecuted David displayed an obedient faith that feared and sought God, was sensitive to his own sin, and looked to God for deliverance.

I. Intro - Louis Zamperini and The Bird

- A. Amazing story told in “Unbroken” - WWII POW
- B. The Bird dehumanized Zamperini, and almost killed him
- C. Zamperini hated him and dreamed of murdering him
- D. Zamperini eventually found Christ - and forgave the Bird
- E. How will David react under continued mistreatment from Saul? We will see a variety of responses over next 3 weeks

II. The Characteristics of Faith

A. Faith seeks God

When David was told, “Look, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are looting the threshing floors,”² he inquired of the Lord, saying, “Shall I go and attack these Philistines?” The Lord answered him, “Go, attack the Philistines and save Keilah.” 1 Samuel 23:1–2

- 1. David hears the Philistines are attacking Keilah
- 2. His first reaction - seek God about what to do!
- 3. David is not personally in danger - but he is still seeking God. Faith seeks God in good times.
- 4. Faith is an orientation towards God, seeking Him and His will. It is the opposite of self-reliance.

But David’s men said to him, “Here in Judah we are afraid. How much more, then, if we go to Keilah against the Philistine forces!”⁴ Once again David inquired of the Lord, and the Lord answered him, “Go down to Keilah, for I am going to give the Philistines into your hand.” 1 Samuel 23:3–4

- 5. The men (quite reasonably) are concerned about fighting the Philistines
- 6. David again seeks the Lord about what to do
- 7. This is usually the sign of when David is doing well in these chapters - we are told he sought the Lord.
- 8. Faith is a desire to hear the voice of God rather than man, to know the will of God rather than popular opinion.

When David learned that Saul was plotting against him, he said to Abiathar the priest, “Bring the ephod.”¹⁰ David said, “O Lord, God of Israel, your servant has heard definitely that Saul plans to come to Keilah and destroy the town on account of me.¹¹ Will the citizens of Keilah surrender me to him? Will Saul come down, as your servant has heard? O Lord, God of Israel, tell your servant.” And the Lord said, “He will.” 1 Samuel 23:9–11

- 9. David hears that Saul is coming after him
- 10. His first response is to seek God - this is faith!
- 11. When faced with bad times, faith seeks God rather than merely reacting to the circumstances.
- 12. Saul is never said to seek God throughout this passage. He is led by circumstances - not God.

B. Faith obeys God

Once again David inquired of the Lord, and the Lord answered him, “Go down to Keilah, for I am going to give the Philistines into your hand.”⁵ So David and his men went to Keilah, fought the Philistines and carried off their livestock. He inflicted heavy losses on the Philistines and saved the people of Keilah. 1 Samuel 23:4–5

1. When David knew God wanted him to fight the Philistines, he obeyed.
2. Today many speak of being a “person of faith” who blatantly disregard and disobey God’s revealed will in the Scripture. This is not faith - it is making my own thoughts and desires a god.
3. Saul does this throughout these chapters - using the language of faith while trying to murder and innocent man! Faith is not merely intellectual assent, but an orientation of the will towards God.
4. Faith seeks God for His will, and then obeys. There is no such as disobedient faith.
5. This is what James means by “Faith without works is dead.” A faith that does not produce obedience to God is a false, dead ‘faith’.

C. Faith is sensitive to sin

1. After David escapes from Saul at Keilah, he goes to the region of Ziph - and the people there betray him too! [23:12-28]
2. David then went into the stronghold of En Gedi - and Saul comes after him again!
3. But God delivers Saul into David’s hand in the cave. He is helpless before David - whose men tell David to kill Saul.
The men said, “This is the day the Lord spoke of when he said to you, ‘I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.’” Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul’s robe. 1 Samuel 24:4
4. However David realizes that he has sinned.

Afterward, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe. 1 Samuel 24:5

5. The men’s words may have seemed right, but David’s trained conscience told him it was wrong. He had been disrespectful to God’s anointed king, doing the very sign that God used to take the kingship from Saul’s family.
6. True faith does not takes its standard from the culture, but rather from God and His Word.
7. Obedient faith wants to please God, even if it displeases other people.

D. Faith lives in the fear of God

He said to his men, “The Lord forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the Lord’s anointed, or lift my hand against him; for he is the anointed of the Lord.” 1 Samuel 24:6

1. The men think David should kill Saul - but he fears God, who would disapprove
2. Although Saul has rebelled and been extremely wicked, he is still the king, and as such is ordained by God and David must not sin by refusing to be subject to him.
Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Romans 13:1
 - a. A strong message to many believers in our day who think nothing of reviling leaders with whom they disagree
 - b. Such actions are sin, and true faith should repent of them.

3. Obedient faith lives in the fear of God, looking to please Him in every area of life, regardless of the consequences.

E. Faith looks to God for deliverance

1. David not only let Saul get away - he then exposes himself to danger by calling out to Saul!
Then David went out of the cave and called out to Saul, "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. 1 Samuel 24:8

2. David is in extreme danger here - but he is trusting God for deliverance.

3. David will not try to work his own deliverance - he trust God to save him

This day you have seen with your own eyes how the Lord delivered you into my hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, 'I will not lift my hand against my master, because he is the Lord's anointed.'... ¹² May the Lord judge between you and me. And may the Lord avenge the wrongs you have done to me, but my hand will not touch you. ¹³ As the old saying goes, 'From evildoers come evil deeds,' so my hand will not touch you. 1 Samuel 24:10, 12–13

4. Furthermore, David takes an oath to not kill Saul's descendants to secure his own dynasty
"Now swear to me by the Lord that you will not cut off my descendants or wipe out my name from my father's family." ²² So David gave his oath to Saul. 1 Samuel 24:21–22
5. If David is going to see God's promises fulfilled, it will be done by God, not David's maneuverings. And if David is to have a lasting dynasty, it will be done by god, not by slaughtering Saul's family.

6. Faith does not hedge its bets, but trusts completely in God's ability to fulfill His promises and save.

III. The Consequences of Faith

A. Those who live by faith are punished by the world

1. Because David is walking faithfully before God, he is suffering at the hands of Saul.
2. Furthermore, David is betrayed by the Ziphites and people of Keilah who wish to curry favor with Saul
3. This is a normal part of living by faith in God
In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³ while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 2 Timothy 3:12–13
4. If the unbelieving world rejected, persecuted, and killed the sinless Son of God, why would His sinful followers expect any less?

B. Those living by faith are rewarded by God

1. God guides, encourages and protects David throughout this entire time.
2. God hides David from Saul, causes the Philistines to come and distract Saul, and even hands Saul over to David - all to show His favor is upon David.
3. Even though David sins and falls short, God is faithful to save, deliver, and establish David forever.
4. This shows the importance of faith - it is the only way we receive from God
And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. Hebrews 11:6

- a. It is impossible to please God apart from faith
- b. We do not live by our works, but by faith. Where there is faith, God sees and rewards us because of His covenant promises in Christ!

- 3. Do I have a healthy fear of God that leads to obeying God? (This is the fruit of living faith!)
- 4. Am I sensitive to my own sin - in the midst of a culture that denies the very existence of sin?
- 5. Do I trust God to deliver me? Now and in eternity?

IV. Applying the Word

A. Have I come to God by faith alone in Christ alone?

- 1. Issue of faith versus works is central to Scripture
- 2. Hebrews 11:6 - it's only through faith we please God
- 3. In fact, we are justified by faith apart from works
I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹⁷ For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."
Romans 1:16–17

For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law. Romans 3:28

- 4. This is why the Reformers declared with Scripture that we are justified by faith alone in Christ alone
 - 5. There is a basic distinction between those who look to Christ alone as their righteousness and those who think that our works contribute
 - 6. Have I looked to Christ alone by faith alone?
- ### B. Am I living by faith each day?
- 1. Salvation does not just begin by faith - we live each day by faith
 - 2. Do I have a life orientation to God - seeking Him daily?

C. A prayer of faith

The Fugitive's Faith

1 Samuel 23-24 (1 Samuel 24:11-15)

May 22, 2016

Prayer

Numbers 6:24-26

Teaching keywords: biblical characters; faith; character; sovereignty of God

The Lord bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. Numbers 6:24–26

11 See, my father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe but did not kill you. Now understand and recognize that I am not guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion. I have not wronged you, but you are hunting me down to take my life. 12 May the Lord judge between you and me. And may the Lord avenge the wrongs you have done to me, but my hand will not touch you. 13 As the old saying goes, 'From evildoers come evil deeds,' so my hand will not touch you. 14 "Against whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog? A flea? 15 May the Lord be our judge and decide between us. May he consider my cause and uphold it; may he vindicate me by delivering me from your hand." 1 Samuel 24:11–15