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## Becoming Christlike – Learning How from Old Testament Kings and Prophets

### Session 15 – Why We Are The Way We Are

After laying a foundation we began looking at Saul, the first king of Israel. Last session we looked at Saul's first major sin of disobedience with devastating consequences. We are striving to understand God, ourselves, life, in order to be right with God and pleasing to Him. We want to honor and glorify God with our lives, since we have eternity to look forward to and all that we do has eternal ramifications. We saw with Saul, he sinned, and the consequences were devastating...he lost the kingdom!

God does not violate his nature and will not break His Word. If he says there will be consequences, there WILL BE CONSEQUENCES.

We are reminded of the man who tried to steady the Ark of the Covenant and was struck dead. The Word of God had been that no one was to touch the Ark.

#### **I Chronicles 13:9-10**

**9** And when they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzzah put out his hand to take hold of the ark, for the oxen stumbled. **10** And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and he struck him down because he put out his hand to the ark, and he died there before God.

God is faithful to His Word. With the good and the bad, with the blessings and the cursings. His Word is not to be taken lightly.

### Great Courses - Knowledge

Micheal had received a "Great Courses" catalog. He made a sweep through it naming certain titles of the many courses that are available. He made the point that there is so much knowledge "out there". There are statistics that say that the sum of human knowledge is doubling more and more often. After WWII knowledge doubled every 25 years. Now the average human knowledge doubles every 13 months. Daniel had predicted that travel and knowledge would increase.

#### **Daniel 12:4**

**4** But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. **Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."**

We each make the choice of how we are going to spend our time. We are always doing one thing at the expense of fifty other things we could be doing. We would be wise to opt to spend our time gaining knowledge about God and His Word.

#### **I Corinthians 13:8**

**8** Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; **as for knowledge, it will pass away.**

Human, worldly knowledge is going to pass away!

What doesn't pass away is God's Word, and the spirit of God in us which gives us eternal life.

We are not going to pass away. We have eternity to look forward to and that is why we study God and who He is and how we should live to please Him. Christ said if you love me, you will keep my commandments. In order to keep them, we have to know what they are.

God gave His Word so we can know and DO IT. We must know the Word so we can be obedient.

We had planned and announced that we would look at Saul's second act of disobedience in I Samuel Chapter 15. However we will postpone that.

### **A Lens Through Which to Assess All of History**

Today we are going to consider a lens through which we can see why we do what we do as human beings. We ended last session asking how and why did Saul do what He did after all that God had done for him?

This session we will explain that to the best of our ability and it will enable us to actually understand all of history! That is a major claim. Last spring we looked at this topic but today we will look at it at a deeper level.

#### **Acts 13:16-22**

**16** So Paul stood up and motioning with his hand said: "Men of Israel and you who fear God, **listen.**

Listen! Pay attention!

**17** The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it. **18** And for about forty years he put up with<sup>b</sup> them in the wilderness. **19** And after destroying seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance. **20** All this took about 450 years. And after that he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. **21** Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. **22** And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.

Paul covered all this Old Testament content in just seven verses. Consider all one had to have read to understand all this. We need to have read the first 5 books, then Joshua, then Judges and I Samuel. Paul was expecting they knew all this content when he summarized.

That is why we must study the Word at the expense of studying other things.

**The lens I want to discuss on how we view life, ourselves, God, sin, our nature will give us a better motivation, understanding and reason for why we should be concerned about holiness, godliness, righteousness, truthfulness, and pleasing God. Why should we learn to defeat envy, jealousy, greed, selfishness, pride. How and why should we change?**

Last spring we covered our predicament in our discussion about growth to maturity, change, and genuine discipleship. We looked at the world, the flesh, and the devil. But this lens I am going to share today will give us an even deeper understanding of why we do the things we do.

This lens will help us in our study of all the kings.

### **I Samuel 13:11**

**11** Samuel said, “What have you done?” And Saul said, “When I saw that **the people were scattering from me**, (1) and that **you did not come within the days appointed**,(2) and that **the Philistines had mustered at Michmash**,(3) **12** I said, ‘Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the favor of the Lord.’ So I forced myself, and offered the burnt offering.”

Saul gave three excuses/reasons/rationalizations for why he disobeyed. Saul acted out of his initial inclination to get for himself what he wanted.

- He cared what the people thought, and he was losing them
- He was impatient that Samuel was a bit late and did what he wanted to do, not really thinking of the consequences. He did not pause to consider another option which was obedience.

**13** And Samuel said to Saul, “You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of the Lord your God, with which he commanded you. For then the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. **14** But now your kingdom shall not continue.

Saul suffers these tremendous consequences. The kingdom which might have been established forever is going to be taken away from him.

The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince<sup>b</sup> over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you.”

God’s response is to make David king in place of Saul.

### **The Reason We Do Things Comes From Within**

The reason we do things comes from within. It comes from what is in our heart. If we understand the root cause of our inclination to sin, we will “buy into” how God has addressed that root cause and given us a solution. It will help us to “buy in” to the steps needed to overcome and not be ruled by the inclinations of our flesh.

Consider:

- Saul’s disobedience here in I Samuel 13
- Moses striking the rock twice. He was angry and acted out of a dictate of his flesh.
- David’s illicit behavior with Bathsheba and then his actions to cover up his sin

We are going to look at a few lists that outline the state and condition of man.

### **Titus 3:3**

**3** For we ourselves were once **foolish**, disobedient, led astray, **slaves to various passions and pleasures**, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others, and hating one another.

Foolish is the first thing listed. The first thing Samuel told Saul was “You have done foolishly!” It is always foolish to disobey God. Proverbs talk a lot about the fool and his characteristics.

Slaves to various passions and pleasures. Why? WHY?

Why are we so self-interested, self-absorbed? What is within causing us to act that way?

### **2 Timothy 3:2-5**

**2** For people will be **lovers of self**, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, **3** heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, **4** treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, **5** having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

Why are we so preoccupied with self?

Each thing on this list focuses on self.

There are many such lists of sin in scripture. The root cause is always self. For example:

Money brings ME what I want for MY SELF.

Proud – it's all about ME so I elevate MY SELF above others.

Abusive – it's about ME, I can abuse you

Disobedient to parents – I am not going to listen to you, I am going to do what I WANT

Without SELF control

### **Galatians 5:19-21**

**19** Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, **20** idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, **21** envy,<sup>d</sup> drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do<sup>e</sup> such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

God is getting across our inclination to do what is opposite to what God wants. It is all satisfying the self. Stop and think about each one and you will see self in each.

In the Gospels, Christ often declared "Wake up! Pay attention! Hear me and understand! Verily verily I say unto you!"

### **Mark 7:14-21**

**14** And he called the people to him again and said to them, "**Hear me, all of you, and understand:** **15** There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him."<sup>e</sup> **17** And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. **18** And he said to them, "Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, **19** since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?"<sup>f</sup> (Thus he declared all foods clean.) **20** And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. **21** **For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, **22** coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. **23** All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."**

What is in there and how did it get in there?

It is all focused on ME & NOW.

How can I get what pleases ME NOW?

### **Romans 7:15-19**

**15** For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. **16** Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. **17** So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. **18** For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. **19** For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. **20** Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but **sin that dwells within me.**

How did that happen? Why is it that sin dwells in me?

Why is our default position satisfying self?

How did we get this way?

### **Back to The Garden...**

Think back to Genesis!

In the garden of Eden Adam and Eve had everything and fellowship with God.

**They had the spirit of God within.**

They were in the presence of God, they walked and talked with God in his perfect creation.

**The had God without.**

**Presence of God Within!**

**Presence of God Without!**

**They were in a totally godly environment.** They had safety, protection, abundance, rest, peace, in this idyllic paradise environment

**They were inclined toward God.** Their focus was pointed in the direction of God, it was all God. They had had God everywhere, they had no need for anything. All was perfect!

Consider how catastrophic it was when they sinned... when they disobeyed God!

God had said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely DIE."

They suffered the consequence. They lost the spirit of God WITHIN.

They were no longer in the perfect godly environment. They got booted from the Garden

They lost God WITHOUT.

And to boot they had transferred their dominion, authority, power, and control to the devil!

They lost everything!

Man had to switch into survival mode in this hostile environment now controlled by the devil.

### **I John 5:19b**

... the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

No longer is food provided. They have to get food on their own and cursed is the ground for their sake.

They have no God without; they have no God within.

Man is now TOTALLY dependant on his own resources in this hostile environment. He doesn't even know that the devil opposing him at every front now.

What does he learn to do? He seeks to fill the complete void within. There is such emptiness. He will do whatever he can by taking things from outside to within to try and fill that emptiness.

### How Can Man Fill the Void?

So what are those presumed void fillers?

Sex, food, alcohol, eventually...drugs, money, power & influence.

If I get enough of...whatever...I can in some way replace what I lost in Eden! Man continually wants to get back to Eden and replace that emptiness, **but he can't!** And that is the history of humanity for the last 6,000 years!

Cain kills Abel out of jealousy. My brother is getting in the way of what I WANT, so I'll kill him.

Sins within we have just read in Titus, Timothy, and the gospel of Mark.

We know from genetics and experience that what's IN parents gets passed to their children

We find ourselves doing the same things our parents did! Where does that come from? It comes from our genes, from our parents.

#### Deuteronomy 5:9

**9** You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting **the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation** of those who hate me, **10** but showing steadfast love to thousands<sup>b</sup> of those who love me and keep my commandments.

I've got to feed my SELF. I've got to make my SELF happy. I have to till the land. I have to build a house for my SELF.

Man became completely SELF-absorbed. When we look at the world today everything is SELF absorption. He tries to fill the hole within, goes to excess and turns into addiction: sports, entertainment, gambling, pornography. People get the thrill they would have had in fellowship with God. They get addicted to these things that can eventually ruin their lives.

God by his mercy and grace provided an answer, a solution. That is why we should buy into God's solution.

### The Appetites of Human Beings

If we stop and think about all the appetites of human beings.

**Book:** *Feeding Your Appetites* by Stephen Arterburn

All of the major appetites were created by God for man in Genesis. These appetites were good when man was in the original godly environment.

Appetite for:

Food – Genesis 1:29 (God gave all the trees in the garden for food – but one!)

Sex – 1:28 (be fruitful and multiply)

Authority and power - 1:26 (have authority over the fish of sea, birds of air, livestock)

Pleasure - 2:9 (the trees were pleasing to the eye and good for food)

Work – 2:15 (man to work in the garden and be satisfied with his work, as God had worked)  
Companionship – 2:18 (it's not good for man to be alone, I will create a help meet for him)  
Fellowship with God – 3:8 (should be number 1, man was to be in intimate relationship with God.)

Wisdom – he was to gain wisdom from the tree of life

All those appetites were good but only in the godly environment where their inclination was directed toward God. All these appetites were natural for them when living in the presence of God so they could be fruitful and multiply.

When they were no longer in the godly environment of the Garden of Eden these appetites turned inward to satisfy the SELF: food, sex, pleasure, power, control, authority!

Look at how it has played out through all of history! "I'll do whatever I have to do to get what I want and satisfy my appetites."

### What is the solution?

God put a plan in place after the fall of man.

Genesis 6

God was grieved that every thought and intention of the heart of man was only evil continually. He wanted what he had had in Genesis and decided he'd get it on his own at any cost. God said, That's it!... Flood!... Starting over.

Genesis 11

All the people on earth spoke one language. Let's build a tower and make a name for ourselves

God put a plan in place to redeem man.

Abraham, Moses, Law to keep man alive till the coming of the Messiah

Now we can have the Word written in our hearts. We have help. We have inclination toward God again.

If the Word is written in our hearts, why aren't all Christians walking with God. Inclinations of fear are still there. People aren't acting like the Word of God is written on their hearts.

We have to flood our minds with God's Word in order to alter the inclination of our hearts back to God.

Tawny example. She is a dog. When a rabbit or coyote runs by Tawny is inclined to run after them. That is her inclination and where she goes.

We can either be inclined toward SELF or inclined toward GOD. God won't make us do anything. He has given us free will. He will never override our free will.

That is essential so it is actually love that compels us to do what God wants us to do.

#### **I Cor. 5:15 NIV**

**14** For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. **15** And he died for all, that **those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.**

I am so enamored by what Christ did for me on the cross not only giving me eternal life but to glorify him in this life and not be ruled by the flesh and the direction of my own heart but from within a mind and heart that is so saturated with the Word that I use my free will choice to align myself with the spirit within me and do what glorifies God.

There are very few people in all of history who have taken God and His Word so seriously that they have done this and truly inclined their hearts to God.

Why did Adam and Eve fall? If they had known the consequence of their disobedience do you thing they's have done what they did?

They did not know how seriously God takes His Word.

He had said "In the day that thou eatest thereof, **thou shalt surely die**"

Eve saw the fruit, it was pleasing, she discounted what God had said. Maybe God is holding out on us. Adam went along with her.

Adam went on to live for 900 years! Do you think he had any regrets?

Jeremiah had warned in his day "You are taking your sin too lightly!"

Who are the people in history who took God's Word seriously?

Moses, David (though flawed but got back on track) Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Paul took the Word seriously.

God wants to restore us to what they had in Eden. Even in this hostile age with the devil as the god of this world. We who are born again of God's spirit with that spirit inclining us to be obedient, we who have new life within and the Word at our fingertips to fill our minds with it and be immersed in it.

All the things they were able to do in Eden are available to us:

We can once again have intimacy with God

We can cling to God

seek God

attach to God

worship God

love God

honor God

please God

That is the lens through which I want to see the behavior of all the Old Testament Kings.

Given our New Life within, our New Creation, our New Birth...all things are new. It is the power of God in us. It is all right there if we will simply take God seriously and believe His Word.

Then you will see people who are truly different!

Christ had said, "You will know who my disciples are by the love they have for one another."

True love is unselfish! It is self-sacrificial love.

That is why it is possible for the body of Christ to imitate and look like Christ.

In each king we will see the inclination from the flesh, they then act on it, and they reap the consequences.

We have the same inclinations in our flesh today but here is what can happen:

Here is the process! Here is what the template can be!

We get an inclination, a first thought (whatever the sin or temptation is)

PAUSE and ask, is there an option? Is there an alternative way to think, an alternate action to take that is supplied by the Word?

I've got some help too. I have an inclination from the spirit of God to do what the Word says.

So I'm going to choose by my free will to incline my heart in the way that aligns with the Word.

I am going to be OBEDIENT and glorify God by doing so.

When we look at each of these kings we will see and how they followed the inclination of their flesh and thereby reaped mostly consequences rather than fruit.