
Becoming Christlike – Learning How from Old Testament Kings and Prophets

Session 28 – Spiritually Firewise

In our last session we covered I Samuel 20. We are going to return briefly to verses 30-34 to look further at the application to Christ and the New Testament as well as the application to families today.

In this section we see a rift occurring between Saul and Jonathan:

I Samuel 20

30 Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman, do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness?"

Saul is declaring that Jonathan has chosen David over him and it's going to be to his detriment.

31 For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom shall be established. Therefore send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die."

Here Saul is appealing to Jonathan's flesh and the missed benefits he could have in this life.

32 "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" Jonathan asked his father.

Jonathan is questioning Saul's judgement and integrity and spirituality. Saul...who is his father... who is the KING of Israel!

33 But Saul hurled his spear at him to strike him. So Jonathan knew that his father was determined to put David to death..

Saul can't control his mind. He can't control himself. He is showing instability. When not in the Word you are subject to the whims of circumstances He is not getting what he wants and actually hurls a spear at his OWN SON!

34 And Jonathan rose from the table in fierce anger and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, because his father had disgraced him.

In righteous anger, righteous indignation, Jonathan has to remove himself from the table and Saul's presence because he was so grieved at his father's shameful treatment of David, who Jonathan already recognized as God's chosen, the anointed next king.

This section causes us to think about Christ having read this section. We must always remember when reading the Old Testament that this was Christ's training manual for his life and ministry. The study of the Old Testament was how he spent his time as he grew to age 30.

Christ had certainly read or heard first Samuel. He would know the early chapters of I Samuel that describe Samuel as a young child and how he had grown in the presence of the Lord. His mom, Hannah, was barren and miraculously conceived and bore Samuel. She dedicated him to the Lord, to learn from the priest in the temple. She wanted him to be a man who would love God for his whole life.

I Samuel 2:21b

And the boy Samuel grew in the presence of the Lord.

Samuel grew in the presence of the Lord.

This is key – if we want to grow we need to be in the presence of the Lord. In the Word. In prayer. That is where real growth is going to take place. The Old Testament can teach us as it taught Christ as he grew.

Growth should be visible!

I Samuel 2:26

26 Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the Lord and also with man.

There really should be growth and change in our lives and it should be visible to those around us.

I Timothy 4:15

15 Practice these things, immerse yourself in them,^s **so that all may see your progress.**

If we are growing there should be a visible change in our lives that others can see. We should grow to the place where we are manifesting fruit of the spirit.

We want to consider this section in I Samuel 20: 30-34 in the context of families. We will look first at the rift that occurred in Jesus' own family.

There are three strands that we will endeavor to bring together.

1. Christ read the Old Testament and knew what was necessary for him to grow.
2. Mary's response and the familie's response to two events and the family rift that occurred.
3. The rift in Saul's family between he and Jonathan

Luke 2

39 And when they (Mary and Joseph) had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. **40 And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.**

This sounds a lot like Samuel as a young child in I Samuel.

41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.

Joseph and Mary were good faithful jews.

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. **43** And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, **44** but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, **45** and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. **46** After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, **listening to them and asking them questions.**

Why was he doing this? He knew who he was. He knew he was to be in the temple learning and listening. (As Samuel had been in the presence of the Lord.)

47 And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and **his answers**.

All were amazed at his understanding and answers. Not the answers of the teachers, but the answers of Jesus. At age 12 he already had an understanding of the Old Testament Law. He already had wisdom at age 12.

48 And when his parents^g saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, “Son, **why have you treated us so?** Behold, your father and I have been **searching for you in great distress.**”

Why have you put us through all this stress and inconvenience? She is very “us” oriented. Why have you done this to us? Why have you put us through so much trouble and worry? Don’t you realize we have been in **GREAT distress?**

49 And he said to them, “Why were you looking for me? **Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?**”^h

Jesus turns the table on them. Jesus is not apologetic. He is so connected to who he is as the son of God. He is not connected to being a son in the family of Mary and Joseph. He is focused on his purpose and calling. He must be in his father’s house, similar to Samuel who grew in the presence of the Lord.

Michael builds a parallel today with a young person who hears the Word of God and gets totally immersed in the things of God. This young person wants to spend all his time reading and studying the Bible and praying and being in fellowship with other believers. He wants to take a trip to Israel. His parents react with shame and embarrassment. “Why can’t you be normal like other kids? Why can you just play video games or get into sports? Why can’t you just go to church on Sunday and then live the rest of the week like everyong else?” Parents are to raise children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They should be rejoicing at this but rather are embarrassed.

50 And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. **51** And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

Why did they not understand? Mary should be thinking of these things! Has she totally forgotten what she experienced 12-13 years ago?

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and in statureⁱ and in favor with God and man.

He increased in spiritual, godly wisdom, not worldly wisdom.

Why did Mary forget Luke 1 & 2? This is an example of what happens when we get settled into our routines of daily life. Mary had a family, trying to raise the other kids swept into the busyness of life.

Take the time to read Luke 1 & 2 and be reminded of the beautiful miracles that had happened.

- Mary’s cousin Elizabeth who had been barren conceives.

- Zechariah is mute until John the Baptist is born then regains speech after he names him “John” per the angel’s instructions to him.
- The angel Gabriel had visited Mary, and she would conceive by the Holy Spirit, God. Her response had been, “Be it unto me according to your word”.
- When she went to visit Elizabeth, John the Baptist had leaped in Elizabeth’s womb at the presence of the child (Jesus) who would be born of Mary.
- Mary speaks the Magnificat which is very similar to Hannah’s prayer in I Samuel.
- They had presented Jesus in the temple.
- Simeon recognizes who Jesus is, prophesies, and is able to go to his grave.
- Anna’s recognition of who Jesus was and proclamation to everyone.

After all these events, the next record is the one we read of Jesus in the temple at age 12.

Now we get to the beginning of Christ’s ministry. How do Mary and the family respond then?

The Gospel of Mark portrays Jesus as The Servant. It does not begin with a genealogy or with his birth but records of him healing, ministering, serving.

The ESV has a chart on Mark 2:1 to 3:6 to illustrate the first 5 controversies between Jesus’ actions and the Jewish traditions.

Five Controversies from Mark 2:1-3:6	
Reference	Point of Conflict
2: 1-12	forgiveness
2: 15-17	eating with sinners
2: 18-22	fasting
2: 23-28	Sabbath
3: 1-6	Sabbath, and the decision to kill Jesus

Early on with the controversial positions, healing, healing on the Sabbath. Already the leadership is opposed to Jesus and wants to kill him. At the same time great crowds were following him.

Look now at Mary and the family in Mark 3:20

Mark 3:20,21

[20](#) Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. [21](#) And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.”

This same Mary who had experienced all the we listed from the events in Luke 1 and 2 is now here at age 30 she is saying Jesus is out of his mind.

This was not their expectation of what the Messiah would do. They expected him to be the king in the line of David. They thought he would overthrow the Romans and reestablish the kingdom of the Jews. They thought he would experience glory, honor and there would be perks and an elevated status for the family.

Instead he was doing these things that were opposed to the religious leadership. They felt they must put a stop to this!

22 And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "by the prince of demons he casts out the demons." **23** And he called them to him and said to them in parables,

Not only is he not the Messiah, but he is working for the devil!

31 And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. **32** And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers^c are outside, seeking you."

33 And he answered them, "**Who are my mother and my brothers?**" **34** And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "**Here are my mother and my brothers!**" **35** For **whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother."**

1. Christ is willing to endure this rift with his family because he is doing what his father wants. It doesn't meet their expectations but he has to do it because of his allegiance to his father.
2. This happens in families today when parents get upset by the actions of a believing kid who is embarrassing them. They just want this kid to be "normal". (Go to church, come home, play golf, play video games then go to church again next Sunday, not be reading and studying the Bible every waking moment you can!)
3. If we are going to be true disciples, we are going to stand out. We may be ridiculed.
4. In our culture "family first" is a prevalent mentality. You often hear people say they are "all about family" or they "will do anything for their family". Some families do everything together. The family is the "be all end all". This is short-sighted. This is temporal thinking rather than thinking about eternity. Families want their kids to get into the "right school" so they can get the "right job". That is worldly wisdom not godly wisdom. The Word is true and instructs us to focus on godly wisdom.

Michael was in the community center that past week when the annual "Firewise Presentation" took place. This is a responsible event aimed at raising awareness of the importance of being prepared for wildfires and how to mitigate them. The focus of course is on safety and protection of one's home and family for this life and right now.

There is a higher kind of wisdom, a spiritual kind of "Firewise" that all believers should be attuned to. **It is to be wise about the fire to come.** The first time God destroyed the world to deal with the evil everywhere on it, he did it with water, a flood.

Next time, He has promised it will be by FIRE. Fire will do what fire does. Think of the recent Maui fire. Everything was burned to a crisp. Only ashes remained. Fire incinerates. Fire destroys.

A word study on Fire will emphasize this for you and you will see how prevalent the mention of “fire” truly is.

All 5 of the major writers of the New Testament focus on eternity. We should not be focused on the here and now either. This life is short compared with eternity. Peter, Paul, James, John and the author of Hebrews ALL focus on eternity.

2 Peter 3

9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you,^a not wishing that any should **perish**, but that all should reach repentance.

In the fire of the second death, people will perish.

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, **and the heavenly bodies^b will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.^c**

Burned up! Works will be exposed for what they are.

11 Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, **what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,**

If our focus is on eternity we will strive to live lives that are holy and godly. Since all that will matter for eternity is what is important to God. Shouldn't I find out what God expects and do my best to do it so that I can please God and be rewarded?

12 waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of the Lord, because of which the heavens **will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!**

This is what “the fire next time” will do.

13 But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which **righteousness dwells.**

14 Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, **and at peace.**

We can have peace knowing that we have eternal life, and we are doing what we should be doing. As we are waiting we should be reaching out to others. We don't want anyone to perish but we want everyone to be included in eternity. This is being spiritually firewise!

Notice the “waiting for” in verses 12, 13, and 14. Why is there this waiting period? Back in verse 9 God is being patient, not wanting anyone to perish. He is giving an opportunity for all to hear the Word so they can repent, and be included in eternity and not perish in the second death.

We know that those who do not get born again, those who do not believe and make Christ their Lord will perish.

Revelation 21:8

8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, **their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.**”

This may sound like we are “going all hellfire and brimstone”. No we are just reading what is written here, which means it’s true, which means this what is going to happen! We are spiritually firewise if we take heed to what is coming.

Peter, Paul, James, John and the writer of Hebrews all say to look to eternity. Is anything more important? This should be our focus.

I Peter 1:13-15

13 Therefore, preparing your minds for action,^b and being sober-minded, **set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 14** As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, **15 but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16** since it is written, “**You shall be holy, for I am holy**

We don’t hear a lot about holiness these days because people are so corrupt. We are to set our hope fully on the grace that will be ours when Jesus Christ returns. As we are looking forward to eternity we are to live holy lives.

Life is brief. We all share a common fate. We will all die. (Unless the Lord returns in our lifetime.)

How do we get to the place where God’s will is more important than family? Where obedience is more important than pleasing family members?

It takes growth over a period of time when we place ourselves in the presence of God, in the Word and in the presence of other believers. God will work within us, and we will grow to the place that what is more important to us is eternity; seeing eternal rewards and in praising and glorifying God.

Wouldn’t we rather bring our family along with us to eternity than just go along or be pulled along by them with the temporal things of this life that they are consumed with?

Ephesians 1:15-18

15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love^f toward all the saints, **16** I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, **17** that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, **18** having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, **that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,**

It can’t be emphasized enough. Paul is saying he is praying that the spirit that they already have inside is going to give them/us WISDOM, spiritual firewise wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

We have eternity to look forward to. All else will be burned up. Why not invest our time in what is going to produce eternal results and rewards.

I Timothy 6:17,18,19

17 As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. **18** They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, **19 thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.**

Some translations render this “take hold of that which is life indeed”. The website is named “Life Indeed”. What is LIFE INDEED, what is TRULY LIFE is not this life. Eternal life is life indeed. Treasure for yourself equals eternal treasure. This is not your 401K, your investments, your wealth or your houses. It is the lasting rewards we will have for all eternity based on what we do in the here and now.

I Corinthians 3:10-12

10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled^b master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let **each one** take care how he builds upon it. **11** For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. **12** Now **if anyone** builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, [things that last] wood, hay, straw [things that don't last]— **13 each one's work will become manifest**, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, **and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. 14 If the work that anyone** has built on the foundation survives, **he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.**

Each one = you and me

If anyone = you and me

Fire is everywhere in the New Testament.

What we do in godliness, holiness, and love will survive. All else will go up in smoke. What will you take with you? God is guarding the treasure you are building up. We need to build things that will survive the fire.

We don't want to suffer loss or have anyone in our families suffer loss. What a joy and privilege we have to build on the true foundation, Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 66

22 “For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the Lord, so shall your offspring and your name remain.

23 From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the Lord.

Isaiah speaks of the new heaven and new earth coming;

Read Revelation 21 and 22 again watching for what is to come.

Those who truly grasp the vision of eternal life to come have no issue with the rift that may occur in their family by their stand for God. They have a higher family with whom they are

associated. Yet in love they will try to “bring along” anyone they can into the hope eternal.