
Becoming Christlike – New Testament Application of Old Testament Lessons

Session 33 - I Samuel 24

Today we're going to continue in First Samuel chapter 24.

Recap of What We Are Doing and Why

The last two teachings were the beginning of the New Testament track. When you look at the website lifeindeed.org under recent teachings you will see Session 30, 31, 32, 33 for the Old Testament. And then you will see NT1 and NT2. And we'll continue like that moving forward.

The reason I'm doing this is so that we can continue seeing the lives of Old Testament kings. Specifically, we've been looking at Saul and David for an extended period of time.

We can look at their lives, the characteristics and attributes that they exhibit, sinfulness in many cases, and then make application with respect to what we know from the Gospels and the Epistles in the New Testament.

Particularly, we know from the Day of Pentecost forward and from the from the Epistles about who we are in Christ, what Christ accomplished for us, what our new identity is and that we don't want to live like and end up like Saul.

And there are other examples we'll look at. We know the greatness of the life of Solomon and the great wisdom that he exhibited. But at the end of his life he fell, and we don't want that to be true of our lives.

So what can we learn and what can we know from the Scriptures specifically in the New Testament about how we can live and walk victoriously in a Christlike manner and not succumb to the pitfalls of the the temptations that can lure people away from living as God has designed us to live and enabled us to live.

Last time I mentioned that Ken had done a four-page piece on our nature and sin and that is now attached to NT1.

I'm always amazed at the gift of the Word. God has given us so much to read and understand. Peter wrote, "God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness." As we delve into the Word with the Spirit of God at work within us, we can understand it, have enlightened understanding, and we can really live victoriously.

SELF-Control or Self-CONTROL (read with the accent on the capitalized word)

I mentioned last time that there's a tremendous lack of self-control in our world today, and even in our Christian world and even in Christian leadership. I've mentioned numerous times that if you subscribe to ministrywatch.com, you'll get a daily e-mail with articles about what's going on in the Christian world. And unfortunately, there is a daily dose of the exposure of Christian leaders who are engaged in sexual impropriety or theft. In this case today it was money laundering. Today there were two pastors highlighted. And again, this is every day. This is so, so sad. And it and it not only is sad for the individual and that family, but for the

congregation that they are a part of. And then for the wider audience of the entire United States and world saying, hey, look, Christians are no different and the Christian leaders are no different than anybody else in the world or the politicians that we have. And that is just such a terrible witness and testimony.

Last session I talked about our witness. Our witness, our testimony is supposed to be to the greatness of God, the greatness of the Word, the Spirit God at work. We are supposed to point to God and his love and his compassion and his grace and his power. We are to demonstrate our ability to overcome our our flesh, our human nature, the world, the devil. We are to live victoriously and be examples to others of what Christ is like rather than being just like the world.

Today the article was about Charles Randy Free. It's interesting his last name is "Free"! He was the pastor of Cedar Cross Country Church in Alvarado, TX, and has been convicted of four first degree felonies and sentenced to seven years and six months in prison, 10 years probation, and two counts of money laundering. They had robbed his church blind, stealing over \$300,000. I don't know how people can do this, but it happens all the time and demonstrates a lack of self-control.

Soon I intend to present a series of teachings to look at how we as Christians can actually exercise self-control and be obedient to what God has instructed us to do and to live as examples.

So as a foundation for this, before we get back to the New Testament and how we can exhibit the fruit of the Spirit, self-control, we're going to look at David and Saul as recorded in I Samuel 24. We will see self-control and a total lack of self-control.

There is a play on words that demonstrates a point. Does someone live with SELF-control, meaning their self, their old self, their human nature self, their self without the spirit of God and the Word of God in them, their self with great worldly appetites and desires controls them. Do they live with SELF-control where their SELF simply controls everything they do, and say and what they pursue, et cetera? Are they an example of SELF-control?

Or on the other hand, does someone exhibit self-CONTROL, meaning control over the self, control over human nature and its desires and what it wants on a daily basis?

So SELF-control or self-CONTROL, (putting the accent on the capitalized word) and we'll be talking about that as we move forward, but we're going to see both and the difference between them in the lives of David and Saul here.

I Samuel 24

I Samuel 24: 1

1^a When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was told, "Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi."

And if you remember last time, way back when we did first Samuel 23 at the end of the chapter, Saul and his army were closing in on David approaching from the other side of the

mountain. David was hurrying to get away, but they were closing in and were about to capture David. But all of a sudden at the last minute, God intervenes.

A messenger came to Saul and said essentially... hey hurry, the Philistines are making a raid against Israel. And remember you're the king and you're responsible to protect us first, not using all of our resources to chase David.

I Samuel 23:28

28 So Saul returned from pursuing after David and went against the Philistines. Therefore that place was called the Rock of Escape.^a **29^b** And David went up from there and lived in the strongholds of Engedi.

I mentioned at that time that you can go there, you can walk up to the top of Engedi, see the caves, and think about it, experience it, then every time you read this record it comes alive for you.

1^a When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was told, "Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi." **2** Then Saul took **three thousand chosen men** out of all Israel and went to seek David and his men in front of the Wildgoats' Rocks.

Isn't this astounding that again he continues to pursue David? He is obsessed. He can't control his own pride, his own desires, his jealousy, his envy, his lust to remain in power even though he knows God has said David is going to be the king. It's total dominance of his his nature and his desire to placate, satisfy, please **self**.

And unfortunately, we look around the world at us today and we see so much of this rampant in the world, and also in the lives of Christians.

Let's just take a moment to go to the New Testament. Speaking of the world we live in today and Saul, because really Saul is the "gift that keeps on giving" **in terms of what we should not do**.

II Timothy 3:1

1 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. **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.

This is a list of sins and it's really talking about those who are in the church because it says they have the appearance of godliness. We see these characteristics and attributes even in people in the Christian world and it should not be.

Proud - Do we see the pride manifested in the life of Saul? Most definitely.

We're going to learn from the Word how not to exhibit and manifest these things in our lives, but instead fruit of the spirit.

So lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive - is this Saul?

Lovers of self proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, Ungrateful, unholy, heartless. Is Saul's picture next to this in your study Bible?

Ungrateful – after all God had done for him, anointing him king, prophesying with the prophets

Unholy - No thought of respect for God and his word and the law at all.

Heartless - David hadn't done anything wrong and he's seeking to kill him.

Unappeasable. Slanderous. – calling David his enemy when David was his helper and servant

Without self-control. Brutal - How about Saul murdering all the priests and then the entire city of Nob without self-control.

Not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with deceit. I mean, again, it's sad, but Saul is “the gift that keeps on giving”, because we can read about him as we have for 23 chapters so far and now in 24, and he is these things.

Instead, we are supposed to be living epistles and manifest the fruit of the spirit of Love, joy. Peace, long-suffering, patience, goodness, meekness, self-control.

Could the disparity and the difference and the contrast be any greater?

So that's what we can look forward to. We want to exhibit self-control and not manifest these other characteristics.

[Colossians 3:5-17](#) has a list of attributes to put off and put on.

[Galatians 5:16-21](#) you can go through that list as well.

There is a verse here in Titus which can give us the opposite and something to look forward to:

Titus 2:11

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, **12** training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.

So the contrast again is stark. We are to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions don't satisfy the flesh and carnality and personal desires **but to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age.**

Yes, the devil is the God of this age, and we live in, according to, or in a culture where we see the course of this world run by the prince of the power of the air. But we can do it if we learn the Word and learn how to manifest fruit of the Spirit.

I Samuel 24:2

2 Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel and went to seek David and his men in front of the Wildgoats' Rocks.

He's the king of Israel, supposed to protect Israel from enemies. And he has decided that David is the enemy who only has 600 people. And **he's taking 3000 chosen men out of all Israel!**

3 And he came to the sheepfolds by the way, where there was a cave, and Saul went in to relieve himself.

This is another example of scripture recording exactly what happened because you wouldn't actually put that in there if you were trying to make a movie.

3b Now David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave. **4** And the men of David said to him, "Here is the day of which the Lord said to you, 'Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you.'"

So it's dark and Saul can't see that they're in there. And the men of David are whispering and saying essentially... hey, this is a total gift from God. Here it is Saul without his military support with him he doesn't know we're in here. You can exact revenge on your enemy here, and you can kill him and wipe out the threat to your life and to your kingship as you've been anointed by Samuel to be the king of Israel.

4b David arose and stealthily cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

I mean, that's getting pretty close. He obviously wasn't breathing heavily, or Saul was very much engaged in relieving himself.

5 And afterward David's heart struck him, because he had cut off a corner of Saul's robe. **6** He said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the Lord's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the Lord's anointed."

And you see this phrase occur here and in verse 26 in other places throughout the Old Testament, here with respect to David not exacting revenge on Saul, there will be another place later on with regards to another individual.

But David in his heart so respects God and the fact that although Saul is being evil and pursuing David right now, Samuel had anointed Saul to be king. He's still the king over Israel and he's respecting the office and the fact that he was the Lord's anointed, and he will not kill him even though he had every right to. It would be in self-defense because he's being pursued with 3000 men.

7 So David persuaded his men with these words and did not permit them to attack Saul. And Saul rose up and left the cave and went on his way.

This is really a remarkable account of David because of his total respect for God, obedience to the Word, not exacting the revenge on someone who really is his enemy. And you'll see in chapters 24-26 there are three similar episodes. David is a warrior. He has already killed many enemies, but he's not going to kill for his own advantage.

He is leaving room for God to bring about in His way what should happen to Saul. He shows tremendous respect for the appointment by God of Saul and has patience to wait for God's timing again. He's exhibiting self-CONTROL and the respect God commanded in other places.

Exodus 22:28

28 "You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.

So that is obviously in the mind and the heart of David.

II Samuel 1:14

14 David said to him, “How is it you were not afraid to put out your hand to destroy the Lord’s anointed?”

II Samuel 19:21

21 Abishai the son of Zeruah answered, “Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the Lord’s anointed?”

I Samuel 24:8

8 Afterward **David also arose and went out of the cave, and called after Saul**, “My lord the king!” And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the earth and paid homage.

Now that takes some guts! You had an opportunity to kill him. He's there with 3000 men to kill **you**, and you're going to go out and let him know that you're there and give him an opportunity to do what he came to do. This shows David’s great faith and trust in God and on so many levels:

1 being patient

2 not carrying out the vengeance he could have but being patient and allowing God to do this over time.

3 then saying, hey, OK Saul, He called after Saul, my Lord the king,.... My Lord the king? Is Saul walking worthy of his kingship? No, Yet David still has great respect.

I Samuel 24:9

9 And David said to Saul, “Why do you listen to the words of men who say, ‘Behold, David seeks your harm’?”

This is wonderful. He's giving Saul another opportunity to see truth, recognize truth, and repent and change. David says to him, Why do you listen to the words of men who say, behold, David seeks your harm? Because in no way was David seeking his harm. And now he just provided a living example of it.

I Samuel 24:10

10 Behold this day. Your eyes have seen how the Lord gave you today into my hand in the cave, and some told me to kill you, but I spared you.

So I'm not listening to the words of other men who say I can kill you.

But you're listening to the words of other men who said David wants to cause you harm.

This is brilliant!

My men told me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, I will not put out my hand against my Lord, for he's the Lord's anointed.

David is giving Saul the opportunity to repent, and giving Saul the opportunity to remember who he is as king and remember what Samuel did in anointing him. He could remember in I Samuel 10 how the spirit of the Lord rushed upon him, and he prophesied, You talk about mercy and grace upon grace exhibited by David to Saul as he is giving him the chance to live up to who he is. Oh, my goodness.

I Samuel 24:11

11 See, my father, see the corner of your robe in my hand. For by the fact that I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you, you may know and see that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not sinned against you, though you hunt my life to take it.

Don't listen to what other people are saying about me. Look, this is the truth. This is who I am. This is my heart as you can see in what I just refrained from doing by exercising self-control and not carrying out what you, Saul, really deserve.

You talk about mercy being exhibited. You talk about David being a man after God's own heart. I have not sinned against you, though you hunt my life to take it. See the stark contrast of hearts!

I Samuel 24:12

12 May the Lord judge between me and you, may the Lord avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you.

Wow. If only we could see this kind of self-control exhibited by leaders today! It's just horrendous what we see in the United States and our own Congress and Senate. And it's pitiful. The kind of lack of civility, total self-absorption, and then carrying out of evil against who you perceive as your enemies. Leaders exercising revenge, elevating self, degrading others. We see it every day.

Instead of taking it into his own hands, David has total reliance on God. He has great faith, trust, and confidence in God. He is courageous because of his belief in God's protection and His faithfulness., He trusts that what God told Samuel and then David that he was going to be king, is going to come to pass, even though his life was under continual threat.

I Samuel 24:13

13 As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Out of the wicked comes wickedness.' But my hand shall not be against you.

Just as we know "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" and whatever is within is going to come out. I said in a recent teaching when we referenced Proverbs and a number of cases said "What is Within Will Win". (WWW) What is within is going to come out. What resides in the heart is going to be manifest in behavior.

"Out of the wicked comes wickedness" was a proverb at that time and what is in the heart of a man is going to come out.

David is setting up the contrast here and says essentially... look Saul, you are pursuing me but what I've just shown you is mercy and grace. So that what came out of me is what resides within me, and I didn't exact revenge and kill you. And now you can see that what people have been telling you about me is not true. And what you believe in your heart about me wanting to cause you harm, is not true by my example.

I Samuel 24:14

14 After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog! After a flea!

In other words, getting him to think logically, reasonably, and consider what has just taken place. After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog? After a flea?

15 May the Lord therefore be judge and give sentence between me and you, and see to it and plead my cause and deliver me from your hand.

Again, hard to overemphasize the mercy, grace, compassion, forgiveness, representing the heart of God from David to Saul.

I Samuel 24:15

16 As soon as David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" **And Saul lifted up his voice and wept.**

He should have wept.

17 He said to David, "You are more righteous than I, for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil. **18** And you have declared this day how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when the Lord put me into your hands.

He said to David, "You are more righteous than I". So here's a moment of lucidity in the face of truth and logic and reason.

And have we seen this before in Saul? Yes, we have. We saw it a couple of times when Jonathan confronted him and he said, OK, I won't pursue David. David is righteous and he hasn't done anything wrong. He did that a couple of times and David confronted him.

This is probably the 4th or 5th time if we go back and count where Saul had a moment where he realized the truth, he lifted up his voice and wept.

He said to David, you are more righteous than I, for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil. Oh, wow. **He's actually speaking the truth here for a moment.**

18 And you have declared this day how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when the Lord put me into your hands.

Recognition, realization of truth and reality for a moment here, We'll see that it doesn't last as we continue reading.

19 For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away safe? So may the Lord reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. If a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away safe?

20 And now, behold, **I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand.**

Wow. You might ask yourself; how can he live with himself day after day, knowing that David has been anointed by Samuel? He's going to be king. He knows in his heart, and he admits it here. I know you're going to be king. The kingdom will be established in your hand.

So why doesn't he relent? No, he continues to pursue, because of his flesh, his carnality, his lack of the spirit of God. The Spirit of God left him though it had been upon him. (And of course they couldn't have the Spirit of God born within them.)

So he's totally carnal, fleshly in pursuit of self and self-interest to the place where he denies God, denies the Word, denies what Samuel said over David as anointed to be king. He is going to continue to try to steal, kill, destroy, and work on the side of the devil rather than for God

I Samuel 24:21

21 Swear to me therefore by the Lord that you will not cut off my offspring after me, and that you will not destroy my name out of my father's house.

He is still self-interested, isn't he? Swear to me, I know you're going to be king. Swear to me that you'll not cut off **my offspring after me** and will not destroy **my name** out of my father's house.

22 And David swore this to Saul. Then Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

Why do you think David and his men still went up to the stronghold? Because they knew the behavior and the past of Saul. Yes, he repented momentarily. He'd had a recognition of truth and moment of clarity. But we know he's going to change and pursue again and try to kill David, David knew his instability.

So David doesn't now come out into the open, OK, Everything's fine. Hey, Saul had a moment of clarity, so I'm safe. But no, he says, OK, men back up to the stronghold, and that's what they did.

Lessons From I Samuel 24

There are so many great lessons here about the hearts of two people, as we've seen throughout I Samuel.

The mercy, grace, compassion, love, forgiveness of God as manifested by David towards Saul, regardless of who he is.

David graciously seeks to remind Saul of who he is, that he's the Lord's anointed to give him another opportunity to live up to that.

And don't we see this in our lives today? How many times in our lives have we fallen short? And a wonderful, loving, caring, compassionate, forgiving brother or sister in Christ comes to us and reminds us of who we are in Christ and gives us that reputation to live up to and the chance to repent and be forgiven and resume our walk with the Lord. We are all human and have all fallen short. We must thank God for what Christ accomplished and for the forgiveness that we have.

This chapter is going to serve as a backdrop for our continuing discussion about self-CONTROL when we get back to the New Testament.

I Samuel 25 talks about the the death of Samuel the prophet, all of Israel mourned, and then David in 25:1 David arose and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

Now why is he going to the wilderness of Paran? Obviously, because he knows that he is not safe from Saul, that Saul is still going to be a threat. Paran is the northeast part of the Sinai Peninsula, that's where they retreat to.

Please read I Samuel 25 on your own. It's the record of David and his men encountering in Maon a very successful businessman from Carmel, very rich. His wife is Abigail. His name was Nabal and he was ruthless and heartless, but a very good businessman. He was unkind to David and his men and David was going to respond and go after Nabal.

Nabal's wife Abigail steps in and goes to David and prevents him from doing this. Again, David exercises self-control and does not exact revenge upon Nabal.

Also read I Samuel 26 where David again spares Saul's life again. David was hiding out and in

I Samuel 26:2

Saul arose and went down to the wilderness of Ziff with 3000 chosen men of Israel to seek David in the wilderness of Ziff.

If you're anything like me, you're saying, wait a minute, did I just read that? Didn't I just read chapter 24? And what happened with David and Saul and what Saul said to David after he was exposed.

So then after that, how can we possibly read in chapter 26 that Saul arose and went down to the wilderness of Ziff with 3000 chosen men to seek David. As you read that, realize that it's a different place and different circumstances.

Again David chooses not to exact revenge upon Saul and we see his self-control.

So with that, we're going to conclude this segment, but we will look forward to getting back to the New Testament.

Looking Forward

My intent is we really want to look at what we have as a result of what Christ accomplished, meaning that we have Christ in us, the hope of glory and all the ability that goes along with that. I want to show how tap into that resource of this mighty wonderful spirit of God living in us and how we cannot be dominated by our self, our flesh, our carnality, but instead be self-CONTROLLED because it's a fruit of the spirit.

We're going to look at a number of verses where it says we are to exercise self-control, which means it's got to be possible.

We live in a world which doesn't exhibit any self-control. People today say whatever I want to eat, I eat. Even if I'm obese, which is more than half the population right now. Whatever I want to drink, I drink. Why? Because my flesh wants it. I want it. So I'm going to do it. I can't exhibit any self-control. My SELF rules my life.

Instead of my being able to exhibit self-CONTROL where my self, my flesh, takes a back seat to that new nature within. It actually says in the scriptures it's a new man, there's an old man, there's a new man, there's our flesh and there's the spirit of God that's within us and we can learn to walk by that spirit.

It's very rare in this day and time to see that even amongst Christian believers.

So it behooves us to learn from the Word how this takes place! How we can actually be victorious in living the Christian life and exhibiting self-CONTROL.