

Westwood Baptist Church *Grounded. Growing. Going.*



Worship Guide for June 4, 2023

Sermon Notes

The Lord's Rejection of Saul: Conflicted, Convicted, and Compelled 1 Samuel 15

The Command of God That Conflicts Us (1 Samuel 15:1-3)

Sometimes what we see in the Bible is not only hard to understand, it is difficult to even read! It can be offensive, repulsive, or even embarrassing. "How could a loving God do that?" is a common response to a passage like we see today. In the judgment of many "that God is a moral monster" and the basis of their rejection of Christianity. God's command to Saul to utterly destroy the Amalekites is a difficult passage. Yet when we see this command in the context of the complete Biblical story, we see displayed the complete character of God and the full spectrum of his redemptive purposes. The just wrath of God should give us pause because judgment is what we all deserve. But when God's wrath is seen in the full glory of the gospel where God's justice and mercy meet at the cross of Christ, it should lead us to thankful praise and Spirit-empowered evangelism.

The Sin of Saul That Convicts Us (1 Samuel 15:4-31)

The story of Saul is, at the human level, one of tragedy. At the heart of this tragedy is human sinfulness. Not just Saul's sin, but the sin of us all. Various elements such as pride, misplaced fear, self-will, selfishness, all these and more reveal the components of sin. But when it's boiled down to its essence, Saul's sin is disobedience - the willful rejection of God's word. Even when given clear instructions from God, Saul chooses to do what he wants instead. God's response couldn't be clearer: "*Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. (1 Sam 15:22)* Saul's sin should convict us of our own sin that seeks our will and way more than God's. That Spirit-led conviction will lead us to godly sorrow, genuine repentance and the joy of God's forgiveness (2 Cor 7:10).

The Delight of God That Compels Us (1 Samuel 15: 22-23)

God is a complex emotional being. But his emotions are not like ours, even though the terms used also describe human emotions. 1 Samuel 15 records some of God's emotional complexity and does so without compromising any component of God's character. The term "regret" ("repent" in the KJV) is used three times in the chapter in reference to God's decision to choose Saul as Israel's king. The word "delight" is also used to describe God's response to our faithful obedience. "The astonishing thing is that God so enters into his involvement with his creation, in particular humanity, and even more particularly with his people, that their failures [and successes] affect him." Therefore, we should be compelled to avoid at all costs that which sorrows him and seek at all costs that which delights him.

Life Group Preparation Guide

"Let the *Word* of Christ *dwell* in you(all) *richly*
teaching and *admonishing* one another in all *wisdom*..."

- *Colossians 3:16a*

Focus #1: GOD

1. What does this passage reveal about the character or nature of God?
2. What does this passage reveal about God's eternal plans and purposes?
3. What does this passage reveal about how God interacts with his creation?

Focus #2: ME

4. How does this passage reveal sin in my own mind, heart, or life?
5. In what ways does this passage help us to see how we need to be aligned with God's will?
6. What is one tangible and measurable way that the Spirit is leading me to respond to his Word?

Focus #3: OTHERS

7. What is one truth that I can share meaningfully with someone, and with whom?
8. How can I specifically encourage someone or everyone in my Life Group from this passage?

Three contributions (reflections, questions, observations, etc.) I plan to include in our next Life Group discussion:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Westwood Staff

Gerald Hodges: Lead Pastor
Jonathan Taylor: Associate Pastor
Jason Engle: Pastor of Students
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Deborah Rudd: Children's Ministry
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JUNE

2-9 Utah Mission Trip
4-7 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
6-July 6 Peru Mission Trip
9 MEMBERSHIP CLASS @ 6:00 P.M.
10 Westwood Women @ 5:00 p.m.
13-14 SBC Annual Meeting - NOLA
14 MEMBER'S MEETING @ 6:30 P.M.
17-27 Hungary Mission Trip
18 FAMILY DEDICATION/COMMISSIONING