

1 Samuel 26 "When We Know God is Sovereign"[\[1\]](#)

Series: "*Learning to Wait on God: The Life of David Before He Became King*"

1 Samuel 16-31

Think about it: What difference should it make to know God is sovereign? What is the difference between fatalism and trusting in God's sovereignty? Is there any such thing as luck? Is it possible for things to just 'happen' in our lives?

Lessons from last week: What must we do in light of 1 Samuel 25?

1. God enables His people to overcome the "warts" in their lives (e.g.--David's wanting to retaliate; David's multiple wives).
2. Great men of God are not men who never blow it, but are men who are willing to admit their fault when they do.
3. Just because we won yesterday's battles is no guarantee we will win today's. If we are to win, we must choose to rely on God today just like we did yesterday.

1 Samuel 26 "When We Know God Is Sovereign"

One of the marks that made David stand out as a great man of God was his confidence in God's sovereignty. In ch 26, his life stands in stark contrast with Saul's life.

I. Saul trusted in himself (1-4).

Q: What was true of Saul?

A. He did not follow God.

We have seen this time and time again. When a person doesn't follow God, he sets himself up for negative influence.

B. He yielded to ungodly influence (1).

Q: From whom?

1. *The Ziphites*

Q: Who were they? Where have we seen them before? 23:19

Q: What was their proposal? V 1

2. *Others (19)* --we'll see them later

Key: When we reject God's influence, we open ourselves up to the ungodly influence of others (contrary to the "blessed man" of Ps 1 who "walks not in the counsel of the ungodly").

C. He took ungodly action (2-4).

Q: What did Saul do? V 2 Took 3000 men and pursued David in the wilderness of Ziph

Discuss: What does this indicate about Saul's weeping back in 24:16? (There he wept when confronted with his sin, and he even prayed for God to bless David) Saul's repentance was merely emotional, not a genuine change of heart and life.

II. David trusted in God's Sovereignty (5-25).

If we trust in God, does it mean we sit back in our rocking chair and watch life go by? Is that what David did? No. He walked by faith. He didn't sit by faith. He took action in dependence upon God. What kind of action?

A. He did his homework (5).

Q: What did David do in v 4? Sent out spies

Q: What did David himself do in v 5? Checked out Saul's camp.

Q: What did David discover about the layout of Saul's camp? Saul was in the middle, with Abner at his side, and his troops around him.

B. He invited godly help (6).

Q: To whom did David speak? Ahimelech and Abishai

Q: What was his request? Who will go with me into the heart of the camp?

Note: If you take God out of the picture, this is a kamikaze mission, a nearly impossible mission that would most certainly end in death. But God was in the picture.

Q: Why do you think Abishai agreed to go? (note: he later became a leading general in David's army) (see: 1 Chronicles 11:20 Abishai the brother of Joab was chief of the Three. He raised his spear against three hundred men, whom he killed, and so he became as famous as the Three.)

Discuss: Why did David want to go into Saul's camp? Not to kill Saul. Not to talk with Saul. His aim was to do something that would show Saul who he was fighting against--not merely David, but the Lord!

C. He took godly action (7-25).

Q: What kind of action?

1. *He invaded Saul's camp (7).*

Q: What was Abishai's suggestion, in v 8? Let me kill him. It'll take but one blow.

Q: What was David's response in v 9?

2. *He spared Saul when he could have killed him (8-9).*

Q: What reasons did David give for not killing Saul?

--He is God's anointed (9) --God will take care of him (10)

3. *He trusted in God's sovereignty (10-11).*

Please don't miss this. There is a great difference between fatalism and trusting in God's sovereignty. David acknowledged four convictions here (10-11): One, Saul was wrong for what he was doing. Two, Saul would die. Three, Saul wouldn't die at David's hands, but God would handle Saul's case personally. Four, God would also take care of David.

Q: David didn't kill Saul, but what did he do in v 12?

4. *He took Saul's spear and jug (12).*

Key: How did David succeed on this dangerous mission? V 12 The LORD!

5. *He confronted the ungodly influences that affected Saul.*

The drama is great here! What influences did David confront? Notice two...

*From Abner (13-16)

Q: What did David say to Abner? He confronted the validity of his loyalty to Saul. "Abner, you're not loyal. But I am!"

*From Others (17-19)

Q: What does v 19 indicate was one of Saul's biggest problems? He listened to ungodly counsel. He let ungodly people sway his thinking.

Application: This happens all the time today. A few years ago I learned about a couple who was attending a liberal church. The wife had refused to leave because her parents and family had belonged to that church for years. Her marriage had been on the rocks because she had placed the ungodly input of her parents above the God's counsel.

6. *He put the focus on the Lord, not himself (20).*

Q: Describe David's view of himself, as revealed in v 19. "a flea"

David puts the focus on God, not himself. By the way, David's aim is not merely to get Saul to stop chasing him. His aim is to see God honored in Israel, in Saul's life, and in his own life.

Discuss: Why is that point important to remember?

7. *He diffused Saul's antagonism with his actions (21-24).*

Q: How did Saul respond in v 21? "I have sinned..."

Q: What did David do that brought about this change of heart? Notice his actions...

*Gave Saul's spear back (22)

*Respected Saul's position (23)

*Revealed his trust was in the Lord (24)

8. *He didn't wait for a "Hollywood ending" (25).*

Q: What happened next? Was there a Hollywood ending? No. The problem was still there, for David's life was still in jeopardy, but David had resolved to be God's kind of person in the midst of the problem.

Caution: We need to be careful to tell people, "Obey God, and your problems will go away." The problems may never leave in this life. Our aim must be to resolve to be faithful and obedient to God no matter what.

Discuss: How does such 'realistic' counsel give people hope?

So David and Saul depart, never to see each other again. What David described as his greatest fear (19) happened in ch 27--David fled to a foreign land, indicating he really did not trust Saul's sincerity. And lest we think David was a superman who never wrestled with doubts, ch 27 is there to bring us back to reality.

Discuss: Since all Scripture in some way points to Christ and teaches us about Christ (John 5:39), what do we learn about Christ from this account?

Implications: Because God is sovereign...

1. I can be sure that things that are out of MY control are not out of HIS control.
2. I must live my life with my focus on God, not on others, nor on self.
3. I can DO what's right even if I don't FEEL like it.

Discuss: Someone may object, "But if I do something without feeling like it, isn't that being hypocritical?" No. It's hypocritical if you do it, and then say you felt like doing it. (e.g.--I didn't feel like getting out of bed today, but I did. That's not hypocritical. If I piously told you I enjoyed getting out of bed today, that's hypocrisy)

[\[1\]](#) These are unedited teaching notes used initially for a Wednesday evening Bible study at Wheelersburg Baptist Church . They are provided for your edification as you personally study God's life-changing Word. Pastor Brad Brandt