



REJECTING GOD

1 Samuel 8:4-9

Big decisions are usually accompanied by tough circumstances. Tension, friction, confusion or something negative seems inexorably joined to weighty choices. These stressful moments not only lay bare our true feelings, they reveal our attitude toward God. Most often that attitude comes down to two options: seeing God as our adversary to be avoided, or our ally to be trusted.

We see this not only in our lives, we see this in the pages of the Bible. There are countless accounts of this being the main struggle in people's lives as we read through the pages of Scripture. Today is no exception as we continue our study in the book of 1st Samuel.

THE ISRAELITES MADE A DECISION BORNE OUT OF

- Impatience - "you have grown old" (v5)
- Envy - "like the other nations" (v5; Deuteronomy 7:6)
- Rebellion - wanting it their way (v6)
- Fear - viewing a foreign threat as bigger than God (1 Samuel 12:12)

A DIFFERENT SITUATION

Luke 7:1-10

- (v3): "When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking [Jesus] to come and save the life of his slave."
- (v4): "When they came to Jesus, they earnestly implored Him ..."
- (v6): "do not trouble Yourself further, for I am not worthy"

- (v7): "... but just say the word ... I also am a man placed under authority ..."
- (v8): "... Jesus marveled at him ... [concerning his] great faith"

WHAT WAS THE RESULT?

- Israel:
 - Their own way
 - Hardship and pain
 - God's continuing pursuit of them
- Centurion:
 - Healing of a valued person
 - Deeper relationship with God / Possibility of salvation

APPLICATION

- The Israelites are a warning to us; the centurion is an inspiration
- God caution against: impatience, envy, rebellion, fear
- God calls us to: belief, trust, surrender, faith

CONCLUSION

So the question we face, not just in stressful times, is which way are we moving toward God or away from Him? When you hear His instructions, does your heart respond with trust knowing that He is always wanting the best for you or with fear thinking that He could be up to something hurtful? Stressful moments reveal the answer to these questions more clearly than our pleasant day-to-day routines. The good news is that today, right now, is an opportunity to be corrected and encouraged through the examples we have seen. We can choose. Choose to trust. Choose to believe. Choose to move toward our loving Father—knowing that as we move to Him, He moves toward us. The question is: will we?