

The Bible 20/20: “A Life of Worship” (3-29-20)

Introduction: This Week’s Reading 1 Samuel 1-24. Today we are reflecting on **1 Samuel 16:14-23**

Recap 1 Samuel 16:14-23:

- Saul has a difficult & demanding job, lot’s of responsibility, and he is in torment.
- His servants recommend music as a source of comfort & rest
- They locate & bring in David to play for Saul to calm his spirit

A Life of Worship - (Compare Saul w/ David)

Saul . . . He had the look and appearance of having it all together, and he was accepted and admired.

1 Samuel 9:2 (ESV)

And he had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.

1 Samuel 10:24 (ESV)

And Samuel said to all the people, “Do you see him whom the LORD has chosen? There is none like him among all the people.” And all the people shouted, “Long live the king!”

However, Saul is actually - **Fearful, Anxious, Overwhelmed, and Insecure**. Here are some examples . . .

- Saul hides at his coronation (1 Samuel 10:22 - he is hiding amongst the baggage)
- Saul relied on other’s strength (1 Samuel 14:52 - attached himself to others of strength)

1 Samuel 14:52 (ESV)

There was hard fighting against the Philistines all the days of Saul. And when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, **he attached him to himself**.

- Saul compromises and explains why . . . (1 Samuel 15:24 - feared & obeyed the people instead of God)
- Saul gets trapped in comparison and it leads to crippling jealousy . . . (1 Samuel 18:7-9)

1 Samuel 18:7-9 (ESV)

(7) And the women sang to one another as they celebrated, “Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands.” (8) And Saul was very angry, and this saying displeased him. He said, “They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands, and what more can he have but the kingdom?” (9) **And Saul eyed David from that day on.**

David . . . A man after God's own heart!

1 Samuel 16:17-19 (ESV)

(17) So Saul said to his servants, "Provide for me a man who can play well and bring him to me." (18) One of the young men answered, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a man of good presence, and the LORD is with him." (19) Therefore Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, "Send me David your son, who is with the sheep."

- David - several good qualities
- His defining quality - the Lord was with him

The Book of Acts shows us God's view of David . . .

Acts 13:22 (ESV)

. . . 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.'

So we have Saul - overwhelmed by the challenges and difficulties of his life, consumed with thoughts of himself and how others perceived him.

And we have David - a man after God's own heart.

So how does this connect with Worship? (In every way possible)

1 Samuel 16:23 (ESV)

And whenever the harmful spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand. So Saul was refreshed and was well, and the harmful spirit departed from him.

Saul - Worshipped as a coping mechanism

David - Lived a life of Worship - His pursuit and focus was God (true worship)

Beware! - Many in our culture have settled for a form of worship that is little more than showing up while someone else sings & plays and then we leave feeling momentarily comforted.

2 key ways David cultivated a life of worship . . .

1) Meditation - Tend your Heart

- Watch what you feed your heart, care for and tend it!
- Many look within for direction (wrong).
- Instead, look to the Lord for direction, set your heart upon him, & pour your heart out to him.

Let's check out Solomon (David's son) view on the importance of tending our hearts . . .

Proverbs 4:20-23 (ESV)

(20) My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. (21) Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. (22) For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh. (23) **Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.**

Note: Gee, I wonder where Solomon learned this?

David teaches us that the way to tend the heart is to meditate on God & His Word . . .

Read:

Psalms 119:15-16 (ESV)

(15) I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. (16) I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.

Psalms 145:5 (ESV)

On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.

Psalms 51:10 (ESV)

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Further Reflection/Meditation:

Psalms 16:7-11 (ESV)

(7) I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. (8) I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. (9) Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure.

Psalms 77:11-13 (ESV)

(11) I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. (12) I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds. (13) Your way, O God, is holy. What god is great like our God?

Psalms 143:5-6 (ESV)

(5) I remember the days of old; I meditate on all that you have done; I ponder the work of your hands. (6) I stretch out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. Selah

Dallas Willard - (from an old article of his that my friend Pastor Ian shared with me this week)

“The inner dimensions of life are what are referred to in the Great Commandment: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself” (Luke 10:27, NASB). This commandment does not so much tell us what we must do, as what we must cultivate in the care of our souls.

As the Living Word and the written Word occupy our minds we naturally—and supernaturally—come to love God more and more because we see, clearly and constantly, how lovely He is.

The wise Puritan, Thomas Watson, wrote:

‘The first fruit of love is *the musing of the mind upon God*. He who is in love, his thoughts are ever upon the object. . . God is the treasure, and where the treasure is, there is the heart.’

In this way we enter a life, not just *times*, of worship.”

This is what David is describing in Psalm 63 - the connection between meditation and worship . . .

Psalms 63:5-7 (ESV)

(5) My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips,
 (6) when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night;
 (7) for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy.

2) Worship - Express your Heart

The Psalms are full of the life & expression of worship . . .

As an example - over 70 times we are told to “sing” in the book of Psalms.

- Singing is a vital form of worship - it’s an outward expression of love & gratitude!
- Love has to be communicated, not just inwardly felt, or assumed to be understood & known.
- This is not about getting you to perform a certain way at church.
- It’s about becoming convinced of the fact that we need to express ourselves in worship!

Psalms 47:6-7 (ESV)

(6) Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!
 (7) For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm!

Psalms 59:16 (ESV)

But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.

Conclusion/Application: Let's use this time of social separation to cultivate a "Life of Worship"

- Meditate on God's Word
- Invite Him to create a clean / new heart within you
- Express your heart back to Him in Worship!

Communion: Meditate on Jesus' sacrificial love for us, and express Gratitude to him!

Matthew 26:26-28 (ESV)

(26) Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." (27) And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, (28) for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) What are the biggest differences between how Saul and David approach worship? What are some of the obstacles Saul faced that seem to keep him from true worship? Do you struggle with any of those?
- 2) While David faced many of the same struggles Saul did, he maintained a heart for God and had the life of a worshipper. What were 2 keys for him to keep his heart with all vigilance?
- 3) How can you practice meditation on God and His Word? What's the difference between reading the bible (or listening to a sermon), and meditating on God? Is there something you could do different to make space for this in your life?
- 4) A key part of spending time meditating on God is inviting him to address the issues of our heart. Is there anything he is showing you right now that needs to change? How can we experience God cleansing or renewing our heart?
- 5) What does it mean to express ourselves in worship? Is that something you are comfortable with - either alone or with others? What is a step you can take to practice expressing your love to God? What role does music and singing play in how we express worship to God?
- 6) What is the most challenging thing for you from this sermon? What step do you think God is asking you to take right now?