

## Text: 1 Samuel 10:17–11:15

**Big Idea:** The more God’s people move forward in faithfulness, the more resistance they should expect; the question is whether we will respond to praise, criticism, danger, anger, and conflict in a God-honoring way.

**Purpose:** To call believers to Spirit-led courage, humble leadership, wise restraint, mercy, and consistency.

### I. Saul Is Chosen, but He Is Hiding

1. **Samuel gathers Israel at Mizpah.** Saul has already been privately anointed, but now God publicly confirms him before the tribes.
2. **Saul is selected by lot.** Benjamin is chosen, then Matri’s clan, then Saul son of Kish, showing that the Lord is directing the process.
3. **Saul is missing when his name is called.** He is found hiding among the supplies, revealing either humility, fear, reluctance, or the weight of the calling.
4. **Application:** We cannot hide from God. If God can find the lost donkeys, He can find Saul in the baggage, and He can find us wherever we are.

### II. Leadership Draws Both Praise and Criticism

1. **The people celebrate Saul.** Samuel presents him, the people see his stature, and they shout, “Long live the king!”
2. **Some valiant men support Saul.** God touches their hearts and provides encouragement and protection.
3. **Some scoundrels despise Saul.** They question his ability and refuse to honor him.

4. **Saul keeps silent.** His restraint is an important early sign of wisdom.
5. **Application:** In life and leadership, we will receive both praise and criticism. Receive praise humbly, receive criticism carefully, and remember that not every offense deserves a response.

### III. Nahash Threatens Jabesh-Gilead

1. **A new enemy rises from the east.** Nahash the Ammonite besieges Jabesh-Gilead and strikes fear into the people.
2. **Nahash demands disgrace.** He offers peace only if he can gouge out the right eye of every man, disabling them for battle and humiliating Israel.
3. **The elders ask for seven days.** They want time to seek help throughout Israel.
4. **Nahash agrees because of arrogance.** Pride makes him think no one can rescue them.
5. **Application:** The enemy often seeks not merely surrender, but shame. Yet human arrogance always underestimates the saving power of God.

### IV. The Spirit of God Moves Saul to Righteous Action

1. **The news reaches Gibeah.** The people weep aloud because Jabesh-Gilead appears doomed.
2. **Saul returns from the fields.** He is still living ordinary life, but the crisis reveals his calling.
3. **The Spirit of God comes powerfully upon Saul.** Saul burns with anger, not petty anger, but righteous indignation against cruelty and evil.

4. **Saul summons Israel.** He cuts up oxen and sends the pieces throughout the land, calling the nation to action.
5. **The people come together as one.** The terror of the Lord falls on them, and Israel unites.
6. **Application:** There is sinful anger, but there is also Spirit-shaped anger against injustice, cruelty, and evil. “Be angry, and sin not.”

## V. God Gives Victory Through Courage and Strategy

1. **Saul sends hope to Jabesh-Gilead.** “By the time the sun is hot tomorrow, you will be rescued.”
2. **The people of Jabesh-Gilead respond with hope.** They tell the Ammonites they will come out the next day, keeping the enemy unsuspecting.
3. **Saul divides the army into three groups.** The plan allows surprise, coordination, and pressure from multiple directions.
4. **The battle comes during the last watch of the night.** God gives Israel victory, and the Ammonites are scattered.
5. **Application:** Spirit-led courage does not cancel planning. God can empower both bold action and wise strategy.

## VI. Saul Chooses Mercy Over Revenge

1. **The people want to punish Saul’s critics.** After the victory, they remember the men who questioned Saul’s kingship.
2. **A new danger appears inside Israel.** If the enemy cannot destroy God’s people from the outside, he will try to divide them from within.

3. **Saul refuses revenge.** He says no one will be put to death because the Lord has rescued Israel.
4. **Saul gives God the glory.** He makes the day about salvation, not personal vindication.
5. **Application:** Humility prevents division. Mercy protects the people of God. The more we focus on what God is doing, the less controlled we are by what people have said.

## VII. Israel Renews the Kingship Before the Lord

1. **Samuel calls the people to Gilgal.** The place reminds Israel of God’s faithfulness and their entrance into the land.
2. **Saul is publicly confirmed as king.** What began privately with Samuel is now affirmed nationally before the Lord.
3. **The people worship and celebrate.** They sacrifice fellowship offerings and rejoice together.
4. **Application:** Victory should lead God’s people to worship, not pride. The Lord is the one who saves.

## VIII. Main Takeaways

1. **There is an enemy, and he is real.** The battle often shows up in ordinary responses: our words, reactions, attitudes, and relationships.