

To obey or not to obey...
that is the question

Rebellion's antidote

From the beginning...

- There is choice
 - Free will

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 - The ability to yield to His authority or reject it
 - The ability to follow Him or to rebel against Him

Man and Woman choose...

- Adam eats what is forbidden and blames Eve
- Eve tempts Adam and blames the serpent

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 - They both repent, but the consequence of their sin impacts relationship with God and others

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- Rebellion enters the experience of humanity

Choice continues in human history

- Cain & Abel
- Days of Noah
- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob leading to Egypt
 - Provision leads to bondage
 - Freedom leads to wondering
- Promised land leads to more poor choices
- Prophets and Kings

God gives Israel a king

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- Samuel's role is to communicate to Saul and to Israel what God expects
- Both men have free will to obey
 - Their choices impact not only their own lives, but the lives of those around them
 - The people of Israel
 - Their children

1 Samuel 15: 18-21

"And the Lord sent you on a mission and told you, 'Go and completely destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, until they are all dead.' Why haven't you obeyed the Lord?"

Why did you rush for the plunder and do what was evil in the Lord's sight?"

"But I did obey the Lord," Saul insisted. "I carried out the mission he gave me. I brought back King Agag, but I destroyed everyone else. Then my troops brought in the best of the sheep, goats, cattle, and plunder to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal."

When you know what you are supposed to do...

- Saul understands exactly what God wants
 - But he looks for some wiggle room
 - He looks for an angle
 - He decides it doesn't have to be just like God says

When you know what you are supposed to do...

- Saul understands exactly what God wants
 - But he looks for some wiggle room
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 - He decides it doesn't have to be just like God says
- Saul has the free will to do what he wants
 - He is king
 - He has authority
 - He can make his own choice

Even though we aren't kings...

- Can't we relate to Saul's dilemma?

Even though we aren't kings...

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- It's our life, isn't it?

Even though we aren't kings...

- Can't we relate to Saul's dilemma?
- It's our life, isn't it?
- The weight of free will
 - Incredible blessing
 - Incredible burden

Saul chooses to worship his way

- Saul tries to convince Samuel that his motive was pure
 - But I brought it back so I could worship God
 - I have that right as king
 - It makes more sense my way

1 Samuel 15: 22-23

“What is more pleasing to the Lord: your burnt offerings and sacrifices or your obedience to his voice? Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams.

Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft, and stubbornness as bad as worshiping idols. So because you have rejected the command of the Lord, He has rejected you as king.”

Whew, that’s a bit harsh...isn’t it?

- Was it that big of deal?
- Why did it matter so much to God?
- And why wasn’t a simple “I’m sorry” okay?

Leadership matters

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 - The people of Israel - God’s people - followed him
- Samuel spoke God’s command
 - The people knew what God expected
 - And yet, they let Saul lead them not only into battle, but also into compromise of what God commanded
 - They were following Saul’s lead in worship as well

This is a big deal

- Not only to the nation of Israel, but also to us

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- Not only to the nation of Israel, but also to us
- Leadership matters
 - King of the Castle
 - Queen of the home
 - Father, mother, big sister, uncle
 - Boss, board member, coach, group leader
 - Disciple making other disciples

Contemporary Leadership Leader

“A leader is one who knows the way,
goes the way,
and shows the way.”

-John C. Maxwell

Saul...

- Knew the way
- Chose to go his own way
- Led others into rebelling against God

(Insert your name here...)

- ----- knows the way
- ----- goes God’s way
- ----- shows the way to pleasing God
 - Blessings of salvation and eternal life
 - Blessings from living with choices that please Him

(Insert your name here...)

- ----- knows the way
- ----- goes a different way
- ----- shows the way to displeasing God
 - Consequences of sinful choices

Obedience is better than sacrifice

- But I want....
 - Where rebellion starts

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Obedience is better than sacrifice

- But I want....
 - Where rebellion starts
- Free will to choose what God wants
- In God's eyes, our obedience matters more
 - Quit arguing with Him about it
 - Quit trying to dress up a pig

Submission is better than worship

- You can miss the mark on worship

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- You are God, I am not
- What You want matters more than what I want

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- Rebellion is tapping into something other than God's will to achieve/acquire what you desire
- It elevates self instead of God
- It elevates evil instead of holiness

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- In God's eyes, that's the way it is
 - Free will

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 - Choose what comforts me
 - Choose to delay what He has said, asked, etc.

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- Consequences for Saul's choice
- God would not tolerate someone else as the one who would be the foundation for spiritual leadership in Israel
- The price of Saul's disobedience was huge
 - For him
 - For his family
 - For the people of Israel

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- Wake up and realize the cost
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- The need for Disciples to disciple is tremendous
- The need for fathers to lead families is tremendous
- The need for faithful leaders everywhere is tremendous

The consequence of sin is great

"Then Saul pleaded again, "I know I have sinned. But please, at least honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel by coming back with me so that I may worship the Lord your God." So Samuel finally agreed and went back with him, and Saul worshiped the Lord... Then Samuel went home to Ramah, and Saul returned to his house at Gibeah of Saul. Samuel never went to meet with Saul again, but he mourned constantly for him. And the Lord was sorry he had ever made Saul king of Israel."

Saul's desire isn't reconciliation
with God; it is saving face

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- Repentance isn't just going through religious ritual - it is a change of heart/mind/spirit

**The man who would be king...
the one after God's own heart**

"Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins. Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. For I recognize my rebellion; it haunts me day and night. Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight..."

- Psalm 51: 1-4

Repentance is the antidote

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- A truly repentant heart pleases God

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- A truly repentant heart leads to restoration
- A truly repentant heart leads to leading others to a truly repentant heart