**Lenten Bible Study**

**Week 6 “Humbly Serve”**

**Dr. Will Butler: Instructor**

**1 Samuel 16:1-13 (NLT)**

 1 Now the Lord said to Samuel, “You have mourned long enough for Saul. I have rejected him as king of Israel, so fill your flask with olive oil and go to Bethlehem. Find a man named Jesse who lives there, for I have selected one of his sons to be my king.”

 2 But Samuel asked, “How can I do that? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me.” “Take a heifer with you,” the Lord replied, “and say that you have come to make a sacrifice to the Lord.

 3 Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you which of his sons to anoint for me.”

 4 So Samuel did as the Lord instructed. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town came trembling to meet him. “What’s wrong?” they asked. “Do you come in peace?”

 5 “Yes,” Samuel replied. “I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Purify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” Then Samuel performed the purification rite for Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice, too.

 6 When they arrived, Samuel took one look at Eliab and thought, “Surely this is the Lord’s anointed!”

 7 But the Lord said to Samuel, “Don’t judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The Lord doesn’t see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

 8 Then Jesse told his son Abinadab to step forward and walk in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, “This is not the one the Lord has chosen.”

 9 Next Jesse summoned Shimea, but Samuel said, “Neither is this the one the Lord has chosen.”

 10 In the same way all seven of Jesse’s sons were presented to Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen any of these.”

 11 Then Samuel asked, “Are these all the sons you have?”

“There is still the youngest,” Jesse replied. “But he’s out in the fields watching the sheep and goats.” “Send for him at once,” Samuel said. “We will not sit down to eat until he arrives.”

 12 So Jesse sent for him. He was dark and handsome, with beautiful eyes.

And the Lord said, “This is the one; anoint him.”

 13 So as David stood there among his brothers, Samuel took the flask of olive oil he had brought and anointed David with the oil. And the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David from that day on. Then Samuel returned to Ramah.

**Background: 1 Samuel 15**

1. God tested King Saul by instructing him to attack the Amalekites and completely destroy them. God saw what the Amalekites did to Israel when God delivered them out of Egypt **(Exodus 17:8-16)**
2. God promised Israel what he would do to the Amalekites

**Exodus 17:14**

 “After the victory, the Lord instructed Moses, “Write this down on a scroll as a permanent reminder, and read it aloud to Joshua: I will

erase the memory of Amalek from under heaven.”

1. King Saul attacked the Amalekites as God instructed him to but King Saul’s pride got the best of him and began to do things his way instead of carrying out God’s instruction
2. He killed all the Amalekites but spared King Agag and the best of the animals
3. King Saul and his army were not willing to obey God’s instructions—this was a serious case of **blatant disobedience** towards God that came from a **prideful heart**
4. God expresses to the Prophet Samuel His disappointment towards King Saul **1 Samuel 15:11**

 “I am sorry that I ever made Saul king, for he has not been loyal to me and has refused to obey my command.” Samuel was so deeply moved when he heard this that he cried out to the Lord all night.”

1. God knew King Saul’s heart, but he gave him a chance to humble himself
2. Samuel was visibly upset, heartbroken, and angry that King Saul didn’t obey God

 “Samuel was so deeply moved when he heard this that he cried out to the Lord all night.”

1. Samuel interceded for King Saul all night.
2. Disobedience towards God’s Word grieves God and it affects the innocent people around us and those under our leadership *(family, occupation, church, organization, etc)*
3. King Saul’s pride led him to self-glorification—**1 Samuel 15:12-13**

 12 Early the next morning Samuel went to find Saul. Someone told him, “Saul went to the town of Carmel to set up a monument to himself; then he went on to Gilgal.”

 13 When Samuel finally found him, Saul greeted him cheerfully. “May the Lord bless you,” he said. “I have carried out the Lord’s command!”

1. King Saul was patting himself on the back by building a monument to himself, when in truth, God gave him the victory over his enemy.
2. When Samuel caught up with Saul, he started *“testi-lying”* about his obedience to Good

 “May the Lord bless you,” he said. “I have carried out the Lord’s command!”

1. Samuel stopped King Saul and made him aware of his sin of disobedience—**1 Samuel 15:14-15**

 14 “Then what is all the bleating of sheep and goats and the lowing of cattle I hear?” Samuel demanded.

 15 “It’s true that the army spared the best of the sheep, goats, and cattle,” Saul admitted. “But they are going to sacrifice them to the Lord your God. We have destroyed everything else.”

1. King Saul thought God would be pleased with his willful disobedience by presenting to God that (the animals) which God told him to destroy in the first place.
2. The prophet Samuel had to tell King Saul what the Lord thought about his failure of obey God’s Word—*listen to the exchange that took place between Saul and Samuel*—**1 Samuel 15:16-24**

 16 Then Samuel said to Saul, “Stop! Listen to what the Lord told me last night!”

“What did he tell you?” Saul asked.

 17 And Samuel told him, “Although you may think little of yourself, are you not the leader of the tribes of Israel? The Lord has anointed you king of Israel.

 18 And the Lord sent you on a mission and told you, ‘Go and completely destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, until they are all dead.’

 19 Why haven’t you obeyed the Lord? Why did you rush for the plunder and do what was evil in the Lord’s sight?”

 20 “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.

 21 Then my troops brought in the best of the sheep, goats, cattle, and plunder to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal.”

 22 But Samuel replied, **“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*.
 23 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.”

 24 Then Saul admitted to Samuel, “Yes, I have sinned. I have disobeyed your instructions and the Lord’s command, for I was afraid of the people and did what they demanded.

1. King Saul asked Samuel for forgiveness but God had already rejected him as king of Israel—**1 Samuel 15:25-28**

 25 But now, please forgive my sin and come back with me so that I may worship the Lord.”

 26 But Samuel replied, “I will not go back with you! Since you have rejected the Lord’s command, he has rejected you as king of Israel.”

 27 As Samuel turned to go, Saul tried to hold him back and tore the hem of his robe.

 28 And Samuel said to him, “The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to someone else—one who is better than you.

1. God approaches Samuel during his time of bereavement. God indicated to him that’ it’s time to move on with God’s plan—**1 Samuel 16:1**

 “Now the Lord said to Samuel, “You have mourned long enough for Saul. I have rejected him as king of Israel, so fill your flask with olive oil and go to Bethlehem. Find a man named Jesse who lives there, for I have selected one of his sons to be my king.”

1. Jesse presented seven of his sons to Samuel and God rejected them all.
2. Samuel thought Jesse’s first Son, Eliab was God’s chosen vessel. Why did Samuel think he was the one?—**1 Samuel 10:21-23**

 21 Then he brought each family of the tribe of Benjamin before the Lord, and the family of the Matrites was chosen. And finally Saul son of Kish was chosen from among them. But when they looked for him, he had disappeared!

 22 So they asked the Lord, “Where is he?”

And the Lord replied, “He is hiding among the baggage.”

 23 So they found him and brought him out, and he stood head and shoulders above anyone else.

1. Eliab must have been tall and handsome. But he wasn’t the one God wanted—**1 Samuel 16:6-7**

 6 When they arrived, Samuel took one look at Eliab and thought, “Surely this is the Lord’s anointed!”

1. God gives Samuel a lesson on ***“God’s method of selecting leaders”***

 7 But the Lord said to Samuel, “Don’t judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The Lord doesn’t see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

1. When Jesse presents his youngest son David, God commands Samuel to anoint Him.

1. Even though Jesse and his sons witnessed the **external anointing** of David, they had no idea what God was doing internally.

**1 Samuel 16:13**

 “So as David stood there among his brothers, Samuel took the flask of olive oil he had brought and anointed David with the oil. And the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David from that day on. Then Samuel returned to Ramah.”

**Lesson on Humility:**

**Humility:** Gentleness or lowliness of mind—**Proverbs 15:33**

 “Fear of the Lord teaches wisdom; humility precedes honor.”

 **Christian humility** is that grace which makes one think of him/herself no higher than he/she ought to think—**Romans 12:3**

 “Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don’t think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.”

 **Christian humility** requires one to feel that in God’s sight, he/she has no merit and in honor to prefer others over oneself—**Romans 12:10**

  “Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.”

 **Christian humility** does not demand a woman/man to practice self-depreciation, to walk in low self-esteem, or think depressing views of oneself.

 As we mature into adults as men and women, we’re to allow the Spirit of Christ to control our minds as God’s holy people—**Colossians 3:12**

 “Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.”

 **James 4:6-7**

 6 And he gives grace generously. As the Scriptures say, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

 7 So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

 **Christian humility** is essential to our discipleship—**John 13:1-17**

 1 Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end.

 2 It was time for supper, and the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus.

 3 Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God.

 4 So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist,

 5 and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel he had around him.

 6 When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?”

 7 Jesus replied, “You don’t understand now what I am doing, but someday you will.”

 8 “No,” Peter protested, “you will never ever wash my feet!” Jesus replied, “Unless I wash you, you won’t belong to me.”

 9 Simon Peter exclaimed, “Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!”

 10 Jesus replied, “A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not all of you.”

 11 For Jesus knew who would betray him. That is what he meant when he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

 12 After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, “Do you understand what I was doing?

 13 You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right, because that’s what I am.

 14 And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet.

 15 I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you.

 16 I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message.

 17 Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them.

1. When Jesus washed the disciple’s feet, he was demonstrating a **servanthood mindset**—**Mark 10:45**

 44 and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else.

 45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

**Questions for Discussion:**

* What does the Spirit of God have to do with humility?
* Where does humility come from?
* Even though King David didn’t live a perfect life, how was he different from King Saul?
* What does humility mean to you?
* How do your actions mirror the example of Jesus washing feet?
* How does our (or your) faith community select and equip leaders to serve in the church, community and/or the world as God’s agents?

**EQUAL IN GOD’S SIGHT**

 *Holy God, How long until we believe in your Word, O God? You do not privilege male over female, nor female over male; There is no master race, no peoples beloved more than another; No being was created to be enslaved, nor to live in forced servitude; Your blessing falls on all without reservation.*

 *How long until we live your Word, O God? Courts, councils, and countries cannot confer on humanity more dignity, worth or status than your image imparted on all flesh. There exists no creed, constitution or covenant that supersedes your divine will for equality, equity, and egalitarianism. May our practices fulfill your prophecy on earth as it is in heaven.*

 *How long until we teach your Word, O God? May we cease devaluing, demeaning, and destroying one another out of greed, hatred, and lust. From the pew to the pulpit, may our words resound with your truth that all flesh – all flesh – is equal in your sight.* ***Amen.***

**by LaTrelle Miller Easterling, June 20, 2014**