

## HOW THE MIGHTY FALL

Saul was a man blessed by God in every way.

**1 Samuel 9.2:** His name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel who was his equal. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.

**Saul's blessings:** God chooses him to be king, the Holy Spirit anoints him, his people love him, his material needs are met abundantly and he enjoys early military success.

But over the next four decades, his life implodes: he is plagued by depression, paranoia and insanity; he comes under the influence of a \_\_\_\_\_ spirit; his son is killed in battle; he is rejected by God as king of Israel; and he is mortally wounded by his enemies.

David's sad words over Saul's death: How the mighty have fallen!

From mightily blessed to an incredible mess – Saul's life was controlled by and brought down by four “heart attitudes.”

Behind these heart attitudes was \_\_\_\_\_ which evidenced itself in pride and insecurity.

### “HEART ATTITUDES” THAT CAN RUIN OUR STORY

#### 1. I CAN DO IT IF I \_\_\_\_\_ TO.

This is a heart of independence.

If I want to do it, I will – nobody can stop me.

It's the idea that there may be rules for others, but they don't apply to me.

There were three great sins in Saul's life.

With each one, his disobedience grows more blatant and more perverse.

- A. In 1 Samuel 13 Saul takes the role of a priest and offers a sacrifice.
- B. In 1 Samuel 15 Saul allows his men to keep the spoils of war that were to be devoted to God – in essence, he steals from God.
- C. In 1 Samuel 28 he seeks spiritual advice from a medium, a witch.

Yes, we can disobey God if we want to – and it will be \_\_\_\_\_ the next time and easier still the time after that.

You can do whatever you please, but do not be deceived: you will reap what you sow; your story will be a disaster and you will fall \_\_\_\_\_ on the battleground

of life.

Some men mindfully make the decision that they will not live by the rules. Others, maybe most, move there slowly, without even being aware of what they're doing -- rationalizing their decisions and making excuses for their behaviors

But there's a problem with disobedience, no matter how we justify it. God will not bless a disobedient life and he cannot bless an \_\_\_\_\_ spirit.

### **What is the antidote to a heart of independence?**

A heart that is \_\_\_\_\_.

A heart that remembers you were once nothing, with no claim on God's grace, much less his blessing, but he gave it to you anyway.

**Psalm 51.17:** The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

## **2. IF IT'S GOING TO GET DONE, I'LL HAVE TO DO IT MYSELF.**

This is a heart of self-\_\_\_\_\_: it's a heart that won't trust God or others.

Saul had a hard time trusting God – he got into trouble over and over because he felt responsible for making everything turn out all right.

Don't trust God and you're likely to step over the line and do what God told you not to do – so you can do what God told you to do.

In other words, you do the wrong thing for what you believe is a \_\_\_\_\_ reason.

Being God when you're not God -- that's a tough gig.

It makes you rush into places you don't belong to do what you shouldn't do to fix problems you can't fix.

**This just in:** The God of the universe has no intention of \_\_\_\_\_.

You can stop applying for his job and micromanaging his universe, his plans and the lives of those around you.

None of God's plans are dependent on you or me -- none of us are that \_\_\_\_\_.

**1 Samuel 14.15:** Then panic struck the whole army – and the ground shook. It was a panic sent by God. Then Saul and all his men ... went into battle. They found the Philistines in total confusion, striking each other with their swords.

### **What is the antidote to a heart of self-importance?**

\_\_\_\_\_ enough to believe that God will accomplish his plans; faith enough to believe obedience is enough.

## **3. IF I DON'T DO IT, I'LL BE \_\_\_\_\_.**

It's called being a \_\_\_\_\_.

It looks like insecurity, but it's a form of pride that says my happiness is more important than my holiness,

my feelings are more essential than my faithfulness, and my being liked is more important than my \_\_\_\_\_ God.

### **Why did Saul disobey?**

**1 Samuel 15.24:** I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord ... because I feared the people and obeyed them.

We can be people-pleasers or we can be God-pleasers.

We can fear others or we can fear God.

We can live for an audience of the many or for an audience of \_\_\_\_\_.

The question is: Whose blessing do we desire and whose condemnation do we fear?

**Oswald Chambers:** The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God, you fear nothing else: whereas if you do not fear God, you fear everything else.

**Andrew Jackson:** One man with courage makes a majority.

### **People-pleasers come in two types.**

- A. Saul: Those who care more about the approval of others than they care about the approval of God.
- B. The woman in my office: Those who care so much about what others think that the judgment of God means nothing to them.

### **What is the antidote to being a people-pleaser?**

\_\_\_\_\_ enough to stand alone, rise above your insecurity and live to please God only.

### **4. LOOK AT ME – \_\_\_\_\_.**

This is a heart for self-\_\_\_\_\_.

**1 Samuel 15.12:** Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning. It was told to Samuel, “Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a monument to himself.”

**1 Samuel 10.22:** The Lord said, “Yes, he has hidden himself among in the baggage.”

It's seldom enough to succeed -- others have to see it and say “look at him.”

Our lives are meant to be monuments, but they are not meant to point to ourselves. They're meant to point to \_\_\_\_\_.

### **What is the antidote to a heart for self-glorification?**

A heart that desires to \_\_\_\_\_ so that all might see the wonder of who he is and be moved to worship and adore him.

Make your life a monument to Jesus and you will be blessed – with peace and joy and contentment and meaning.

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