

Stewardship

Connect Group Guide - 2.1.26

Opening Prayer

Icebreaker

Share about a time when you tried to do something in your own strength instead of waiting on God. What was the outcome?

Key Scripture

- 1 Samuel 10:1 (Saul's anointing)
- 1 Samuel 13:8-14 (Saul's impatience)
- 1 Samuel 15:22 (To obey is better than sacrifice)
- 1 Samuel 16:14 (The Spirit departed from Saul)

Message Overview

This message explores the life of King Saul, who was genuinely anointed by God but lost that anointing through disobedience. Saul forgot that he was a steward of the throne, not the owner. The key lesson: everything we have belongs to God—we are simply stewards. The sermon contrasts Saul (who wanted to protect his throne) with David (who wanted to protect God's presence).

Key Takeaways

- Everything we have belongs to God—we are stewards, not owners
- Anointing stays where obedience lives, but leaves where entitlement rules
- Partial obedience is total disobedience
- To obey is better than sacrifice (1 Samuel 15:22)
- We can lose God's anointing while still maintaining our position/title
- The Holy Spirit lives in every believer but can be quenched or stirred up
- David protected God's presence; Saul protected his throne

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Story

1. What stood out to you most from the message? Why?
2. In what ways did Saul demonstrate that he forgot he was a steward and began acting like an owner?
3. Pastor Mike said, "You can be genuinely anointed and genuinely disobedient." How does Saul's life illustrate this truth?

Personal Reflection

4. What are the "thrones" in your life that you tend to protect more than God's presence? (Consider: career, relationships, finances, reputation, comfort, etc.)
5. Have you ever experienced impatience like Saul, where you took matters into your own hands instead of waiting on God? What happened?
6. The message mentioned "partial obedience is total disobedience." Where might you be practicing partial obedience in your life right now?

Deeper Application

7. What's the difference between protecting your "stuff" (like Saul) and protecting God's presence (like David)? How does this play out practically in daily life?
8. Pastor Mike used the umbrella illustration to show God's covering. Are there areas where you've stepped out from under God's covering? What would it look like to step back under it?
9. "The most dangerous place to live is successful without God's presence." Discuss this statement. Have you seen examples of this in your life or others'?
10. How can we tell the difference between stewarding what God has given us and thinking we own it?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge:

Choose one or more of these action steps to practice this week:

11. Stewardship Audit

- Make a list of the major areas of your life (family, finances, career, time, talents)
- For each area, write whether you've been acting as an owner or a steward
- Pray over each area, surrendering ownership back to God

12. **Obedience Check**

- Identify one area where you know God has asked you to obey but you've been hesitating
- Write down what full obedience would look like (not partial)
- Take one concrete step toward obedience this week

13. **Presence Protection**

- Evaluate: What am I doing to protect God's presence in my life?
- Commit to one daily practice that "stirs up" the Holy Spirit within you (worship, Bible reading, prayer, etc.)
- Set a specific time each day this week to prioritize God's presence

14. **Covering Assessment**

- Using the umbrella illustration, identify any "holes" in your spiritual covering
- What sins or areas of disobedience have you been justifying?
- Confess these to God and ask Him to restore full covering in your life

15. **Wait on the Lord**

- If you're in a season of waiting (like Saul should have done), commit to not taking matters into your own hands
- Journal about what God might be teaching you in the waiting
- Find a scripture about waiting to memorize and meditate on

Leader Notes

- Be Vulnerable: As the leader, be willing to share your own struggles with grace and sin. This isn't about judgment but honest transformation.
- Create Safety: This topic can bring up guilt and shame. Emphasize that conviction from the Holy Spirit is different from condemnation—God convicts to restore, not to destroy.
- Avoid Legalism: While challenging abuse of grace, be careful not to swing to legalism. The goal is heart transformation through love of Jesus, not rule-keeping.
- Follow Up: This is a heavy topic. Check in with group members during the week, especially those who seemed particularly convicted or troubled.

Prayer Requests & Closing