Advice From Samuel

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday December 10th, 2017

Text: I Sam. 7:3

### Intro

1. Rom. 15:4
	1. “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”
	2. God’s word provides encouragement and hope!
	3. We can especially see that when looking at what God has told His people to be pleasing to Him – His word is consistent!
2. Samuel’s leadership starts at a dark time for Israel (I Samuel 7)
	1. Israelites had just been defeated by the Philistines – *I Samuel 4*
	2. The army was defeated – *I Sam. 4:10*
	3. Their leaders were dead (Sons of Eli and Eli) – *I Sam. 4:11, 18*
	4. The Ark of the Covenant had been taken away in battle – *I Sam. 4:11-6:21*
	5. There must have been embarrassment and shame, for them and for God! These were God’s chosen people.
	6. Then His children, who should have known better, opened the Ark when it was returned to them in Beth-shemesh and God struck down 50,070 of the people – *I Sam. 6:19*
	7. In this shameful position, as lost as they could be, Samuel begins to lead as Prophet, Priest, and Judge!
3. I Sam. 7:1-3
	1. The Ark was taken to Kiriath-jearim and stayed in the house of Abinadab for 20 years!
	2. Samuel gives advice to the Israelites to turn their shameful state into one of glory and get right with God! – I Sam. 7:3 – *They can be delivered!*
		1. Turn whole heart to God
		2. Remove idols
		3. Serve God alone
4. Samuel’s advice is still relevant to not only God’s people today but also all those who desire to turn to God! *(Rom. 15:4: Encouragement & Hope in the consistency of God’s word)*

#### Turn Whole Heart to God

* 1. I Sam. 7:3
		1. “Return to the LORD with all your heart”
		2. That is a heart that’s committed and prepared and directed towards God.
		3. No physical, outward appearance or work alone would gain them the favor of God, but a heart committed to Him would gain His favor!
	2. Application:
		1. Mt. 22:37 (Quoted from Deut. 6:5): All people are to love the Lord with everything that they are: Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength (Mk. 12:30) – Especially God’s people!
		2. Jer. 31:31-34: Part of the New Covenant prophecy was that the people would turn their hearts to God *(Heb. 8:8-13; Heb. 10:15-17)*
			1. Fulfilled in the blood of Jesus (Lk. 22:20; Heb. 9:15) – God wrote His laws on our hearts in Jesus’ blood (New Covenant)!
		3. I Jn. 5:1-4: Turning to God with our whole heart is seen in our love for Him to obey His commands and in our overcoming faith!
		4. Lk. 8:15: The good soil is “an honest and good heart” that hears the word and holds it fast, bearing fruit with perseverance! This takes turning our whole heart to God! *Not giving in to trouble or distractions but staying faithful!*
	3. Turning our whole heart to God requires our submission to Him in obedience and faith!

#### Remove Idols

* 1. I Sam. 7:3
		1. “Remove the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you”
		2. Their sins had to be put away!
	2. Application:
		1. I Thess. 1:9: The Thessalonians were an example of people who turned “from idols to serve a living and true God!”
		2. I Jn. 5:21: Saints are to be aware of and avoid idols!
		3. What does modern day idolatry look like?
			1. Material images are not necessary for one to practice idolatry! (Though it still happens today!)
			2. Anything competing in our hearts with God when it comes to our trust, dependence, affection & love – *Mt. 6:19-24; Phil. 3:18-19*
			3. *Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5:* While some may not actually serve idols, there are things in our lives that can “amount to idolatry”: Greed, Covetousness…
			4. Money, power, status, physical appearance, pleasure, leisure, social change, religion, etc…
			5. *Rom. 1:18-25 (1:29-31):* Disobedience, Ignorance, More Disobedience, Ungrateful, Pride, Materialistic – Exchanged the truth for a lie – served the creature rather than the Creator!
			6. False religion is idolatry *(II Cor. 11:3-4; Gal. 1:6-9; II Jn. 9)!*
		4. Heb. 12:1-2: Must be willing to give up whatever it is that stands between us and God, or what stands in the way of serving God!
	3. Removing idols is getting rid of sin in our lives that entangles and hinders us!

#### Serve God Alone

* 1. I Sam. 7:3
		1. “Direct your hearts to the LORD and serve Him alone”
		2. They would no longer live to serve an idol, or even themselves, but God alone, above all else!
	2. Application
		1. Mt. 4:10 (Quoted from Deut. 6:13): Jesus told Satan, “Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY”
		2. *I Thess. 1:9:* The Thessalonians turned from idols to serve God alone!
		3. I Jn. 5:19-20: Jesus is the true God & in Him is eternal life! (Mt. 11:28-30) – We must know Him to serve Him! *(Mt. 6:33; Col. 3:1-2)*
	3. Serving God alone is to make Him our priority in life above all else!

## Conclusion

1. *I Sam. 7:4-15:*
	1. Israel followed the words of Samuel.
	2. They fasted, they prayed, they confessed, they put away the foreign gods, they sacrificed unto God, and they were delivered from their enemy (a great deliverance)!
2. So what about *YOU?*
	1. Are you separated from God?
	2. Are you lost?
	3. Is it possible that you find yourself in a dark place?
	4. Have you found yourself in a shameful, or even an embarrassing place?
3. If so, help is not far away – Samuel’s advice to Israel is still applicable today *(Rom. 15:4)!*
4. You too can be delivered by turning to God, putting away the sin in your life, and serving Him above all else!
5. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent of your sins and be baptized! (II Pet. 3:9)
6. If a Christian in error, Repent and return to God!
7. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!