

## **Lessons from the Life of Saul**

1 Samuel 8-31

Reading: 1 Samuel 15:10-30

### **The Life of Saul**

The tall handsome man.

Lack of self-confidence – hidden among the baggage.

Successful in leading several campaigns.

But at the height of success, he began to disobey God.

He took things into his own hands.

God leaves him to his own devices and he is tormented.

David shows up on the scene and Saul's insecurity consumes him.

His own son befriends David and he attempts to kill David.

He begins to slaughter all those who ally with David.

Drives David to his enemies.

David spares him twice and he relents for a short time.

In the end, unable to face defeat and failure, he kills himself.

### **Lesson 1: Don't Judge a book by its Cover**

Saul had the appearance of a King: Tall & Handsome

He fit the image of the people – their expectations

But Expectations of people are fickle, impossible and destructive

What expectations do we have of others?

What expectations do we have of the church?

Are we trying to keep up with the Jones'?

What expectations do others have of us?

Caveat: This does not mean that we should be without direction.

### **Lesson 2: Don't Believe your Own Hype**

Saul was a victim of his own success

He began to project an image of himself

But he could not sustain it because it wasn't who he really was

He was disintegrating

God rejected him at the height of his success

Or, He rejected God at the height of his own success

Crisis of insecurity at every turn

Inside, he was afraid.

The baggage, his soldiers, his monument, Samuel's backing

David's Popularity, murder of the priests, suicide.

Sick, twisted, full of hate and fear that led to violence and destruction.

What is your Achilles' heel? What disintegration is there in your life?

How will you deal with it before it becomes a monster?

### **Lesson 3: Obedience is better than Sacrifice**

Discipleship is better than Religious Pretence.

Expectations, semblance of religion, outward practice.

This was not what God wanted of Saul.

God wanted Saul to commune with him.

Obedience is not a cage but a key.

It is a key into the Kingdom.

It is the key to relationship.

Jesus himself equates obedience with Love.

"If you love me, obey my commands."

You obey the one you trust.

You trust in his love.

If you miss any one of these three things your life will be like Saul's.

They are each interwoven.

On their own, they can mislead.

### **Conclusion**

Saul did not begin as an evil man, a bad man.

He became that way because that is the natural progression of sin.

Self-reliance versus faith.

Self-indulgence versus obedience.

Self-centredness versus love.

So we too are tempted to be self-oriented rather than Christ-centred.

This is the invitation – to let Jesus be the centre.

**Question:** What does it mean to trust God?