



MAIN SCRIPTURES

- II Peter 1:5-7
- 1 Samuel 1-3
- 1 Samuel 15

OBJECT LESSON: VIRTUE

- The Basics
- Incorporating Virtue
- Discarding Virtue

FOUNDATIONAL SCRIPTURES:

“...to those who have obtained the same precious **faith** as we have obtained, and obtained it in the same way, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:” 2 Peter 1:1

“For this very reason you are required to do your part. Make every effort to add to your faith virtue; add to virtue, knowledge; add to knowledge, self-control; add to self-control, perseverance; add to perseverance, godliness; add to godliness, brotherly affection; and add to brotherly affection, love.” 2 Peter 1:5-7

“If these things are yours and abound... and...if you do these things...” 2 Peter 1:8, 10

“He who lacks these things is nearsighted; he is approaching total blindness. It’s as if he has forgotten he’s been completely cleansed from his old sins.” 2 Peter 1:9

“Just as, **“The dog returns to his own vomit,”** and “the pig that has washed returns to wallowing in the mud.”” 2 Peter 2:22

INTRODUCTION: Object Lesson: Virtue

Faith is the foundation of the Christian life and it is a gift from God that came to you by way of His grace. And you must practice your faith if you wish to gain continual access to that grace. To do so, add these things to your faith in this precise sequence. First add virtue. That means to seek the Lord's voice for what is right in every matter and don't even attempt to seek new information or take any action before you are confident you're in alignment with God's will.

Once you are certain about God's directions, to truly demonstrate wisdom, begin by gathering any missing information before you act. It is only after you have the necessary knowledge to proceed judiciously that you should take any decisive action. It requires excellent self-control to both take wise action and to refrain from acting when God tells you to be still. It is also critical to recognize that challenges and temptations surely await; they will test you, misdirect you, and humble you. Nevertheless, one must stay the course to fulfill God's desires, and that takes perseverance. By the way, unless you humbly come to the conclusion that you made an error that must be corrected before you continue, persist until you succeed; a display of permanent self-control is part of the process. However, if you do discover you've made an error, it is prudent to retrace your steps to find your mistake. Begin by

reconsidering if you've misinterpreted God's original instructions and proceed from there.

This entire process is meant to be pursued in every area of life. Doing so is the very essence of godliness. No doubt, your imperfections will be exposed as you progress, but godliness is not characterized by perfection. Godliness, instead, is the authentic grace-empowered pursuit of perfection, not the achievement of perfection. It's hallmark is a never-ending desire to pursue God's will in all things, and to make the appropriate corrections along the way.

And that is how a disciple of Christ becomes an effective minister of reconciliation—one who readily imparts God's grace. His relentless pursuit of godliness has crafted him into a man whose surrendered life is poured out in sacrifice for the priorities of others. He is a beacon of brotherly affection who exudes kindness, a true disciple of Christ recognized by the love he shares. He imitates the character of Christ, and that is the constant meditation of his heart—to look more and more like Christ by how he loves.

God is love; so, to become love is to become like Christ. Thus, to imitate God's love is the only true measure of a perfect man—the full stature of Christ. And that is the goal of discipleship. Therefore, practice diligently if you wish to experience the fullness of God's precious and exceedingly great promises, the greatest of which is the promise to partake in God's Divine Nature.

THE BASICS

1. Everything Begins with Faith

A. Faith Like Mine

(1) Faith: The Foundation of Everything (See: [Faith Like Mine](#))

(a) Two Faiths: From Faith to Faith

1. “For I am not ashamed of the Good News of Christ, because it is **the power of God for salvation** for everyone who believes, for the Jew first, and also for the Greek. For **in it is revealed God’s righteousness from faith to faith**. As it is written, “But the righteous shall live by faith.”” Romans 1:16-17 WEBUS

a) God’s righteousness is revealed through His gift of faith. That gift comes only by way of Christ’s righteousness.

1) “*Simon **Peter**, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained the same precious **faith** as we have obtained, and obtained it in the same way, **by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:**” 2 Peter 1:1*

b) God’s righteousness is also revealed through the way you practice your faith! That part is not a gift, but rather it is your job to live by faith.

1) *“For this very reason you are required to do your part. **Make every effort to add to your faith...**”* 2 Peter 1:5

(b) The gift of faith must become your practice of faith!

1. “Being therefore **justified by faith, we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom **we also have our access by faith into this grace** in which we stand. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Romans 5:1-2 WEBUS

a) **Justified by Faith:** The gift of faith came by way of God’s grace that touched your heart and softened it to the Gospel of Salvation; the cross became real to you and you repented, believed, and confessed. All your sins were instantly forgiven and you had right standing with God. You were no longer in debt to God; now you are in harmony with God.

b) **Access by Faith:** The practice of faith means to exercise the free gift of faith. Doing such gains you continual access to God’s grace. God’s grace empowers you to live your life as a disciple of Christ. You leave behind the sin of your old life and you become a new creation. The Practice of faith is what distinguishes a disciple from a convert.

B. **Just Add P.R.A.C.T.I.C.E.** Persistent **R**epetition **A**ccelerates Character Transformation Impacting **C**hristian **E**thos.

(1) The 7 Steps to Practice Faith (See: [Just Add P.R.A.C.T.I.C.E](#))

(a) Add to your faith: the order is as important as the steps!

1. **“For this very reason you are required to do your part. Make every effort to add to your faith virtue; add to virtue, knowledge; add to knowledge, self-control; add to self-control, perseverance; add to perseverance, godliness; add to godliness, brotherly affection; and add to brotherly affection, love.”** 2

Peter 1:5-7

- a) **Faith (Ground 0):** the foundation of the Christian life and a gift from God that came by way of His grace. You must practice your faith if you wish to gain continual access to God’s grace. To do so, add these things to your faith in this precise sequence:
- b) **Virtue (Step 1):** moral excellence is the first thing to follow faith and must precede all others, or your coordinates will ALWAYS be off target! Morality according to world standards is ever-changing, so we define virtue as what is morally excellent to God—truth that never changes. To practice our faith we must first consider:

- 1) What is right to God in this situation?
 - 2) What does Yahweh think about this?
 - 3) What is God's heart on this matter?
- c) **Knowledge (Step 2):** the additional information you need to know in order to act wisely! To do what is right in God's eyes you must fill in the knowledge gap. Ask...
- 1) What am I missing?
 - 2) What do I need to know before I act?
- d) **Self-control (Step 3):** to act wisely and not by your first impulses and desires! Wisdom is the godly application of knowledge, instruction and understanding.
- 1) Once you know what God wants you to do and you have filled in the knowledge gap, you must have the self-control to do it.
 - 2) Self-control has two arms:
 - a. **One:** take action.
 - b. **Two:** be on constant guard that your actions stay in alignment with virtue and knowledge.
 - 3) Self-control also has two components:
 - a. **Do:** once you know what to do and how to do it, you must do it.

- b. **Do not do:** you must also know what not to do and then you must not do those things.
- 4) Telling yourself no, when yes is so tempting; and telling yourself yes, when no would be so much more convenient, is to live a life of self-control.
- e) **Perseverance (Step 4):** Doing what is right, no matter how hard, or how long it takes, or what the cost!
 - 1) **Suffering:** it is clear that suffering, challenges, and difficulties are part of the process. If Y'shua suffered, why not you?
 - 2) No matter how long or what the challenges, you persist in what God has called you to do (or abstain from what God has called you to abstain.)
 - 3) Perseverance is PERMANENT SELF-CONTROL.
 - a. You know what is right according to God!
 - b. You know how to do it and you do it!
 - c. You discipline yourself from straying off course, but it is still not working as planned!
 - d. The fruit is elusive; the breakthrough absent; suffering persists; and hope starts to fade...
 - 4) Don't ever surrender! Don't give up!

- 5) That is what perseverance looks like:
permanent, relentless, never-ending self control.
- f) **Godliness (Step 5):** holistic integrity!
 - 1) Godliness is characterized by the desire to be in alignment with God's will in every area of life and then the pursuit of that alignment.
 - 2) It means that all the components of your spirit, soul and body are longing to be in complete agreement with what they were designed for by your Creator.
 - 3) It does not mean you have perfected your quest, but instead that you have perfected your pursuit!
 - 4) In other words, godliness is the authentic grace-empowered pursuit of perfection, not the achievement of perfection.
- g) **Brotherly Affection (Step 6):** It's simple, but not easy; be kind to and prefer others and the needs of others over yourself and your own needs!
 - 1) Christian Alert: It's never been about you!
 - 2) Christ did everything for us, not for Himself.
 - 3) That is the model of how we should live—with others as our top priority.

- 4) No greater love is there than to lay down our lives for others, like Y'shua did (John 15:13).
- h) **Love (Step 7):** God is love (2 John 4:8, 16); it is His divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). And there is no fear in love; perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18). Love is the bond of perfection (Col. 3:14).
 - 1) We can experience God in us (Col. 1:27).
 - 2) We can have the mind of God and think like God (1. Cor. 2:16).
 - 3) WE CAN LOVE LIKE GOD! *"We love Him because He first loved us."* 1 John 4:19
 - 4) Love is the Divine Nature. It is the goal and pinnacle of the discipleship model.
 - 5) To love like God is to become like Christ!

C. The 1 Thing

- (1) Life-Altering Critical Negligence (See: [The 1 Thing](#))
 - (a) One thing can shipwreck everything!
 1. **"He who lacks these things** is nearsighted; he is approaching total blindness. It's as if he has forgotten he's been completely cleansed from his old sins." 2 Peter 1:9
 - a) Lacks what things? The practice of adding these things to your Faith: Virtue, Knowledge, Self-

control, Perseverance, Godliness, Brotherly Affection, and Love!

b) Cause of Blindness: living *in the past* prevents you from seeing *in the future*!

1) Forgetting you've been cleansed from your past sins: if you forget you were ALREADY cleansed from your past sins, you will not pursue...

adding to your faith... (because you will likely pursue you past sins!)

2) If that happens, the fullness of God's promises becomes elusive; your participation in the Divine Nature, impossible!

c) Why is forgetting you've been cleansed from your past sins so devastating?

1) One who holds onto his past sins is bound to repeat them!

a. ***"The dog returns to his own vomit,"*** and ***"the pig that has washed returns to wallowing in the mud."*** 2 Peter 2:22

d) How then should you live instead?

1) ***"For we have spent enough of our past time doing the desire of the Gentiles, and having walked in lewdness, lusts, drunken binges,***

orgies, carousings, and abominable idolatries.” 1

Peter 4:3 WEBUS

2) *“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and **sin which clings so closely**, and **let us run with endurance the race that is set before us**,” Hebrews 12:1 ESV*

- a. You’ve invested too much into your former pagan life.
- b. Don’t invest even one more resource!
- c. Don’t even go near your past sins!
- d. Leave the past in the past and pursue becoming more like Christ every day!

(2) Therefore.... **“If these things are yours** and abound... and...**if you do these things...**” 2 Peter 1:8, 10

(a) That is why YOU are being REMINDED!

1. **“Therefore I will not be negligent to remind you of these things, though you know them and are established in the present truth.** I think it right, as long as I am in this tent, **to stir you up by reminding you, knowing that the putting off of my tent comes swiftly,** even as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. Yes, **I will make every effort that you may always**

be able to remember these things even after my departure.” 2 Peter 1:12-15 WEBUS

- a) What Peter has to say is so important that he uses his last words before he is executed to remind his students, and us, of these truths... (See: [A Last Will & Testament](#))
- b) It's a reminder because it's not new information; he's been teaching his disciples these things and the critical nature of the information is already fully established in them...
 - 1) ***“If these things are yours and abound... and... if you do these things...”***

(b) This is Peter's second letter...

- 1. “This is now, beloved, the second letter that I have written to you; and **in both of them I stir up your sincere mind by reminding you that you should remember the words** which were spoken before **by the holy prophets and the commandment of us**, the apostles of the Lord and Savior,” 2 Peter 3:1-2

WEBUS

- a) Peter emphasizes to his students that this is the second letter he has written to remind them of these things.

- b) This second letter is most critical, of course, because he is acutely aware that he is about to be executed (*“knowing that the putting off of my tent comes swiftly”*), so it has a greater sense of urgency.
 - c) Peter makes it clear that his message is consistent with the prophetic Scriptures.
- (c) Peter also reveals that Paul taught similar things...
1. “Therefore, beloved, seeing that you look for these things, **be diligent to be found in peace, without defect and blameless** in his sight. Regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; **even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote to you, as also in all of his letters, speaking in them of these things.** In those, there are some things that are **hard to understand**, which the ignorant and unsettled **twist, as they also do to the other Scriptures**, to their own destruction. You therefore, beloved, **knowing these things beforehand, beware, lest being carried away with the error** of the wicked, you fall from your own steadfastness.” 2 Peter 3:14-17 WEBUS

- a) Paul teaches the same things to whom he writes his letters...
- b) His message is consistent with both Peter and also the prophetic Scriptures.
- c) But Paul, unlike Peter who was a simple fisherman, is a scholar who writes in such a way that the average man has some difficulty in understanding his complexities.
 - 1) See the introduction to 2 Peter: [A Last Will & Testament](#), for a comparison between the characters traits of a fisherman and a scholar.
 - 2) Those with bad intentions, the “ignorant and unsettled” twist what Paul is teaching.
 - 3) But we must remain clear; what Paul teaches is in complete alignment with what Peter teaches.

INCORPORATING VIRTUE

2. Adding Virtue to Faith

A. What does it mean to add virtue to your faith?

- (1) You must hear God’s voice and obey!
 - (a) Add to your faith: the order is as important as the steps!
 - 1. “For this very reason you are required to do your part.
Make every effort to add to your faith virtue; add to

virtue, knowledge; add to knowledge, self-control;
add to self-control, perseverance; add to
perseverance, godliness; add to godliness, brotherly
affection; and add to brotherly affection, love.” 2
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- a) **Faith (Step 0):** the foundation of the Christian life and a gift from God that came by way of His grace. You must practice your faith if you wish to gain continual access to that grace. To do so, add these things to your faith in this precise sequence:
- b) **Virtue (Step 1):** moral excellence is the first thing to follow faith and must precede all others, or your coordinates will ALWAYS be off target! Morality according to world standards is ever-changing, so we define virtue as what is morally excellent to God—truth that never changes. To practice our faith we must **first add virtue:**
 - 1) **From our Introduction:** *That means to seek the Lord’s voice for what is right in every matter and don’t even attempt to seek new information or take any action before you are confident you’re in alignment with God’s will. Ask...*
 - a. What is right to God in this situation?

- b. What does Yahweh think about this?
 - c. What is God's heart on this matter?
- (b) To know what God thinks, a man of faith must be able to hear God's voice! Fortunately...
1. **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."** John 10:27 WEBUS

B. Object Lesson: Obeying God's Voice

(1) The Backstory (1 Samuel 1-2)

(a) Eli is the priest and Hannah is without a son...

(1 Samuel 1:1-28)

1. Hannah had no children because Yahweh had shut up her womb.
2. Eli's had two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, who were serving as priests to Yahweh.
3. Hannah prayed year after year for a son.
 - a) "Yahweh, if you will indeed look at the affliction of your servant and remember me, and not forget your servant, **but will give to your servant a boy, then I will give him to Yahweh all the days of his life,** and no razor shall come on his head."
4. Eli saw her and at first he thought Hannah was intoxicated because she was praying silently—her lips were moving but there were no audible sounds.

- a) Hannah revealed to Eli that she was praying about having a son and what she would offer God if He gave her one (She would dedicate his entire life to Yahweh).
 - b) Eli responded, “Go in peace; and **may the God of Israel grant your petition.**”
 - c) Hannah departed with a feeling of relief because of Eli’s prayer.
5. Then Elkanah (her husband) knew (was intimate with) Hannah his wife; and Yahweh remembered her prayer.
- a) She conceived and bore a son; and she named him Samuel.
6. After she had weaned him, she brought him to Yahweh’s house in Shiloh.
- a) She said, “I prayed for this child, and Yahweh has given me my petition which I asked of him.
Therefore I have also given him to Yahweh. As long as he lives he is given to Yahweh.”
- (b) Hannah’s prayer and Eli’s wicked sons Hophni and Phinehas. (1 Samuel 2:1-36)
- 1. Hannah prayed and exulted in Yahweh!
 - 2. Samuel served Yahweh before Eli the priest.

3. But, Eli's sons were wicked men.
 - a) They didn't know Yahweh.
 - b) They extorted the people's sacrifices to Yahweh for themselves.
 - c) Their sins were very great before Yahweh.
 - d) They caused men to despise Yahweh's offerings.
4. To the contrary, Samuel ministered before Yahweh.
 - a) Eli blessed Elkanah and Hannah: "May Yahweh give you offspring from this woman for the petition which was asked of Yahweh."
 - b) She bore three additional sons and two daughters.
 - c) Samuel continued to grow before Yahweh.
5. Eli was very old; and he heard that his sons were also having sex with the women who served at the door of the Tent of Meeting.
 - a) Eli tried to warn them... "You make Yahweh's people disobey. If one man sins against another, God will judge him; **but if a man sins against Yahweh**, who will intercede for him?"
 - b) They didn't listen to the voice of their father, because Yahweh intended to kill them.
6. Meanwhile, Samuel continued to grow and increased in favor both with Yahweh and also with men.

7. Then, **a man of God** came to Eli and prophesied...
- a) Because Eli would not restrain his sons, because Eli honored his sons above Yahweh, the blessing over his family line would be removed.
 - b) Now Yahweh says, "Those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me will be cursed. **There will never again be an old man in your house.** All the increase of your house **will die in the flower of their age.**"
 - c) The sign that this prophecy is true is that your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, will both die on the same day.
 - d) "Then Yahweh **will raise up a faithful priest for Himself who will do according to that which is in His heart and in His mind [the very essence of virtue].** He will build him a sure house. He will walk before His anointed forever."
 - e) Prophecy Fulfilled: (1 Samuel 4:10-11): Hophni and Phinehas were slain on the same day.

(2) Virtue: To Hear God's Voice and Obey (1 Samuel 3)

- (a) Yahweh speaks to Samuel and he obeys... (1 Samuel 3:1-21)

1. Eli was getting very old...

- a) Samuel ministered to Yahweh and Yahweh's word was rarely heard in those days, as there were not many visions at that time.
 - b) However, things were about to change!
2. Samuel was sleeping in the temple with God's ark present.
- a) Yahweh called Samuel. He said, "Here I am." (But Samuel thought it was Eli's voice.)
 - b) He wakes Eli who tells him, "I didn't call. Go back to bed."
3. Yahweh called a second time and the same thing happens! Why?
- a) Samuel had not yet known Yahweh's voice.
 - b) He had not yet encountered Yahweh with such intimacy that he could recognize His voice.
 - c) Yahweh's word was not yet revealed to him.
 - d) Note: ***Virtue is to do according to that which is in Yahweh's heart and in His mind***
4. Yahweh called Samuel a third time and the same thing happens.
- a) But this time Eli perceived that it was Yahweh who had called out to Samuel.

- b) Eli tells Samuel, “Go, lie down. If you hear the voice again say, **‘Speak to me Yahweh; for your servant hears.’**”
 - c) So Samuel went and lay down in his place.
5. Yahweh then called him again as at the other times...
- a) “Samuel! Samuel!” Then Samuel said, **“Speak; for your servant hears.”**
 - b) **Yahweh said to Samuel**, “Behold, I will do a thing in Israel at which both the ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from the beginning even to the end.” (As we saw in 1 Samuel 2.)
 - c) “For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity (the opposite of virtue) which he knew, because his sons brought a curse on themselves, **and he didn’t restrain them.**”
 - d) “Therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli’s house shall not be removed with sacrifice or offering forever.”
6. Samuel stayed in bed until the morning, and when he rose to open the doors of Yahweh’s house, he felt

afraid to tell Eli of the vision. (*This is when we see the difference between Eli and his sons, and Samuel.*)

- a) Eli called Samuel and asks him, "What is the thing that Yahweh has spoken to you? Please don't hide it from me."
- b) Eli warns, "God do to you, and more, if you hide anything from me that he spoke to you."
- c) Samuel told him every bit of what Yahweh said, and hid nothing from him.
- d) Eli accepts his fate, "It is Yahweh. Let him do what seems good to him."

7. Virtue: To Hear God's Voice and Obey

- a) To do according to that which is in Yahweh's heart and in His mind.
- b) Samuel grew, and **Yahweh was with him** and let none of his words fall to the ground.
- c) **Samuel was established to be a prophet of Yahweh.**
- d) Yahweh appeared again in Shiloh; for **Yahweh revealed himself to Samuel** in Shiloh by Yahweh's word.

DISCARDING VIRTUE

3. Discarding Virtue and Your Faith

A. Object Lesson: Ignoring God's Voice

(1) Iniquity: To Hear God's Voice and Disobey

(a) Saul hears the voice of Yahweh... but discards it! (1

Samuel 15:1-35)

1. Samuel, the acting prophet of God has a message for Saul, king of Israel (*an unspecified number of years after Samuel was called by God in the temple in 1 Samuel 3*)...

a) We have a history together...

b) Yahweh sent me to anoint you to be king of Israel.

2. Listen to the voice of Yahweh's words (**Virtue**)!

a) He remembers what Amalek did to Israel, how he was against Israel when they came out of Egypt.

b) Strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have, and don't spare them.

c) Kill man, woman, infant and nursing baby, ox, sheep, camel and donkey.

3. Saul went to the city of Amalek, and ambushed it:

a) First he offered to spare the Kenites because they showed kindness to Israel when they came out of Egypt.

- b) He told the Kenites to separate from among the Amalekites so they don't become collateral damage!
4. Saul then struck the Amalekites and did the following:
- a) He took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive.
 - b) He utterly destroyed all the people by sword. (But did he?)
 - c) Saul spared Agag and the best of the sheep, cattle, calves, and lambs.
 - d) All that he saw was good, **he was not willing to utterly destroy**, but everything that was vile and refuse, that he destroyed utterly.
5. Yahweh's word came again to Samuel.
- a) "It grieves me that I made Saul king. He has refused to follow me, and **has disobeyed my commandments.**"
 - b) This made Samuel angry and he cried to Yahweh all night.
6. Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning.
- a) Saul passed through Carmel on his way to meet Samuel in Gilgal.
 - b) In Carmel, Saul **sets up a monument for himself!**

- c) When Samuel arrives, Saul greets him with a blessing. "You are blessed by Yahweh!" (*He is hedging, trying to smooth things over, because he knows in his heart what he has done is wrong!*)
 - d) And then Saul makes the most absurd claim, "**I have obeyed the commandment of Yahweh.**"
7. Samuel responds to Saul's ridiculous assertion:
- a) If you utterly destroyed everything as Yahweh commanded, "Then why do I hear the sounds of sheep and cattle?"
8. Saul's answers get more absurd each time he opens his mouth:
- a) **First he deflects blame:** "The **people** spared the best of the sheep and cattle from the Amalekites."
 - b) **Then he gives the dumbest reason imaginable:** "They were disobedient to Yahweh by sparing the best things, **so they could sacrifice what they kept in their disobedience to Yahweh** your God." (Notice he says "**your God!**")
 - c) **Then Saul acts completely clueless:** "We have **utterly destroyed** the rest." Utterly means completely. He did not utterly destroy the best

things, yet he claims he still utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

9. Samuel offers to tell Saul what Yahweh said to him about his actions and Saul accepts. Samuel said...
 - a) Though you were nothing, you were made the head of Israel. Yahweh anointed you king.
 - b) Yahweh sent you on a mission to utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, to fight against them until they were completely consumed.
 - c) Why then didn't you obey Yahweh's voice (**Iniquity vs. Virtue**), but took the plunder, and did what was evil in Yahweh's sight?

10. Saul answers Samuel...

- a) **Again, it's a ridiculous response. He claims to have obeyed, while he describes his disobedience!** "But **I have obeyed Yahweh's voice**, and have gone the mission which Yahweh sent me, and have **brought Agag the king of Amalek**, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites."
- b) **And then he blames the people again, as if they acted alone, as if he's not their leader!** "But **the people** took of the plunder, sheep and cattle, the best of the devoted things, **to sacrifice to Yahweh**

your God in Gilgal.” (Notice again he says “your God.”)

- c) And somehow he reiterates that it’s perfectly acceptable to disobey God **if it’s purpose is for a devotion and sacrifice!**

11. Samuel sets the record straight!

- a) Do you think Yahweh prefers your offerings and sacrifices, **over obeying His voice (your virtue)?**
- b) No, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen to Yahweh’s voice is better than any offering!
- c) In fact, your rebellion is the same as **the sin of witchcraft**, and your stubbornness is the same as idolatry and the collection of cultish objects.
- d) And now, because you have rejected Yahweh’s word, **he has also rejected you from being king.**

12. Saul attempts to repent:

- a) Samuel, “I’ve sinned; **I’ve transgressed the commandment of Yahweh** and your words.”
- b) “I did it because I feared the people and obeyed their voice.”
- c) “Please pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship Yahweh.”

13. Samuel answers Saul:

- a) "I will not return with you; for **you have rejected Yahweh's word, and Yahweh has rejected you from being king over Israel.**"
- b) **You heard God's voice and disregarded it!**
- c) NOTICE: the exact opposite of the character of Samuel... "*Yahweh will raise up a faithful priest for Himself who will do according to that which is in His heart and in His mind [the very essence of virtue].* (1 Samuel 2:35)

14. As Samuel turned to leave, Saul grabbed the skirt of his robe, and it tore.

- a) Samuel said to him, "**Yahweh has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today**, and has given it to a neighbor of yours who is better than you."
- b) "The Strength of Israel (Yahweh) will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man, that he should repent."

15. Saul begs:

- a) "I have sinned; yet please honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel, and come back with me, that I may worship Yahweh your God."
- b) So Samuel went back with Saul; and Saul worshiped Yahweh.

16. Then Samuel asks that Agag, the king of the Amalekites, be brought to him...

- a) Agag came to him cheerfully, believing that he was past the risk of being executed (he was mistaken).

17. Samuel assured Agag that was not true.

- a) "As your sword has made women childless, so **your mother will be childless** among women!"
- b) Samuel then cuts Agag in pieces before Yahweh in Gilgal.

18. Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house.

- a) Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death (1 Samuel 31). Samuel mourned for Saul.
- b) **Yahweh grieved that he had ever made Saul king over Israel.**

(2) **Conclusion:** to Incorporate or Discard Virtue

(a) **Samuel incorporated virtue:** heard God and obeyed...

- 1. Yahweh raised up Samuel who did according to that which is in Yahweh's heart and in His mind.
- 2. Samuel was established to be a prophet of Yahweh.

(b) **Saul discarded virtue:** heard God and disobeyed...

- 1. Yahweh rejected Saul as king over Israel.
- 2. Yahweh grieved that he had ever made Saul king.

(3) Outcome of discarding God's voice...

(a) God will choose someone other than Saul to use...

1. "Yahweh said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, **since I have rejected him from being king over Israel?** Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, **for I have provided a king [David] for myself** among his sons.""

1 Samuel 16:1 WEBUS

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

1. Read the introduction three times. Read 1 Samuel 1-3 and 15.

A. Define virtue.

B. Why must it be the first step in the practice of your faith?

2. Personal Object Lesson:

A. Describe a time in your life when you heard from God and obeyed His voice? What was the outcome?

B. Describe a time in your life when you heard from God and disregarded His voice? What was the outcome?

3. Transformation:

A. What did you or will you do to correct your error in discussion point 2B?

B. What will you do in the future to ensure you do not repeat the same mistake?