

We Always Have God (Cont.)
Saul on Saul – How they handled loss

Our Two Men named “Saul”:

Saul 1 was the first king of Israel who failed to see God’s good purpose for allowing a believer to experience the loss of earthly blessings.

Saul 2, who became the Apostle Paul, who wrote about this very issue

Col. 3:1 If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

(1Sam 10:1-8) Samuel anoints Saul as king over Israel

Vs 2-8 Samuel describes a future scenario of events that Saul will experience ending up with him waiting in Gilgal for Samuel to come so that he could perform the sacrifices to the Lord. Vs 8 You must wait **7 days** until I come to you to tell you what to do.

(1Sam 13:1-14) Saul disobeys God because he feared and refused to endure loss

Vs 1-8 – War with the Philistines; Israel outnumbered, quaking with fear and Saul’s army began to scatter and hide; Saul is waiting on Samuel as commanded but Sam is late;
Vs 9-10 Saul sees the men scattering and thinks that if they make the sacrifice that God will rally the troops and they will return to the fight; If he keeps waiting, the troops will continue to scatter, Saul will lose the war and with it his reputation and loyalty of the men. He imagines that he will lose everything God just gave him.

Saul makes the sacrifices himself and as he finishes, Sam arrives

Vs 11-14 Saul justifies his disobedience and Samuel pronounces God’s will; I saw the men scattering, the Philistines are coming and I needed God to deliver me from the loss of my men, my army, their respect, my victory, my kingship, my whole world.

Samuel explains the consequences of his disobedience.

1. Saul had been given strict orders to wait on Samuel to perform the sacrifices.
2. Saul knew they couldn’t win the war if the Lord didn’t fight for them.
3. When he saw the men scattering, he began to imagine losing his men, losing the war, losing their loyalty and then losing every earthly thing he “needed” to be +H.
4. Samuel was “late” to perform the necessary rituals that would persuade God to deliver him from what he was losing before his very eyes – ram in the thicket.
5. Saul, like all earthly focused believers was works oriented and saw the ritual as the issue rather than the motives or obedience in the heart – disobeyed to manipulate God into giving him what he wanted and was afraid to lose.
6. The imagining (hegeomai) of losing what he valued so much was so unacceptable that he considered keeping it worth disobeying God.

Saul 2

Saul 2 was born into privilege and attained earthly status through his parent’s observance of the law and through his own hard work. When he was saved, God began to teach him that his earthly advantages were useless in the ministry and worthless to bring +H to the life of a Christian.

- (Phil 3:1-11) Suffering the Loss of All Things in order to Gain Christ
(Phil 3:1-6) Confidence in the Flesh – Human ability & Earthly Blessings

(Phil 3:4-6) Paul's human privileges and accomplishments – successful OM system
(Phil 3:7-8) Paul's growth brings a change of heart about the value of earthly blessings

- Vs 7 Those things (human ability & earthly blessings) I had considered beneficial**
Kerdos – gain, profit, benefit, advantage – who wouldn't consider earthly prosperity to be beneficial, advantageous, desirable, etc?
- Vs 7 I now considered (hegeomai) loss; zemia – loss, damage, injury, penalty**
His human abilities & earthly blessings that all his life he had viewed as an advantage he now realized were a hindrance to his spiritual life – interfered with grace system
- Vs 8 Consider all things (all of his human abilities & earthly blessings) to be zemia a hindrance because of the exceeding value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.**
His dependence on his abilities & earthly assets hindered him from depending on God's grace system by which all things of true value are accomplished
- Vs 8 For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things (abandoned all human ability and earthly blessings as worth anything to him) – Didn't need stuff – always had God**

Zemioo – API – passive – not his choice; loss was forced on him; he endured loss

- rendered helpless so that his human ability was useless to him to improve his life or accomplish his ministry – God rejects human ability as useful to further His plan
- stripped of all earthly blessings as he writes from prison where he has been charged with being an enemy of Rome – God taught him that enough for today is enough

(Phil 4:11-13) – Learned contentment with anything – always had enough; always had God

- Vs 8 Consider these things to be rubbish – skubala – garbage, dung, repugnant**
- What the world values, holds hard, embraces, hungers for and sees as +H, Paul realized was all dung because it distracts us from the true value of Christ.
1. Paul was a man of great intellect, ability, accomplishment and endurance.
 2. He was born into wealth and privilege – Jew of Jews and a Roman citizen
 3. His salvation, growth and ministry challenged his focus on earthly things.
 4. Lord systematically put him in positions where his abilities were useless
 - 2Cor 12:7-10 God allows health issues in the life of the man who has responsibility for all the gentile churches? He didn't need good health to accomplish God's will
 - Lost his health – did he fight God over this loss? No he allowed God to humble him and reveal how the grace system works – abandon human ability to use grace.
 5. Lord systematically stripped him of all earthly assets even his freedom
 - Had no money; rejected by his family; refused support from self centered believers like the Corinthians; worked to make traveling money & support himself when involved in evangelism; no monetary goals beyond today; lived only for Christ.
 - Did he fight the Lord over having nothing? Over being assigned to care for believers who were oblivious to his personal needs? Over the loss of his freedom in prison?
 6. Paul embraced his losses as God's will and realized that what the world values so much was totally worthless and even more was garbage to be thrown away.

Paul embraced God's stripping of his human earthly assets – ALWAYS HAD GOD!!