

The Book of 1Samuel—18:17-30

“Don’t Resist an Evil Person”

(11/29/15)

When we started the book of 1Samuel we said that both 1 & 2 Samuel were really books about leadership.

Since, as Paul the apostle tells us, the things written in the O.T. were written for our learning—the thing we learn from the history of Israel is that in the absence of godly leadership a nation will suffer and decline—whereas in the presence of godly leadership it will prosper and be strengthened.

Or to put it another way—as leaders go so goes a nation.

We can see this clearly in the history of our own country as we compare the character, the faith and the godly convictions of many of our founding fathers and the effect they had on the formation of this nation.

We just celebrated Thanksgiving—a holiday in which we thank God for all His blessings to us as a nation.

In 1789, President George Washington issued the first national Thanksgiving Day Proclamation.

Washington was a godly man and one of our country’s greatest leaders—listen to his faith and relationship with God come through his proclamation:

“Whereas, it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor; Whereas, both the houses of Congress have, by their joint committee, requested me “to recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness!”

Now therefore, I do recommend next, to be devoted by the people of the states to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be, that we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country.”

Our nation prospered under the godly leadership of our founding fathers like Washington.

And we can also see that under our current leadership in Washington D.C. our nation has declined—which demonstrates the truth that as leaders go so goes a nation.

One problem endemic to leadership is pride.

Not all leaders are controlled by pride—but many are.

You see the idea of being in authority over others and the power, prestige and other benefits that come with it appeals to those that are driven by pride and avarice.

And as such these kinds of people are drawn to certain professions where they can control and take advantage of others—so often they become politicians, police officers and even pastors.

Now by saying this I’m not intending to paint these professions with a broad brush accusing everyone in them as prideful and corrupt—not at all.

I'm just saying that certain professions attract people that are obsessed with a desire for power and control over others.

I watched a special on Drew Peterson a couple of days ago—Drew Peterson is a retired Bolingbrook police sergeant.

While he was still working for the Bolingbrook police department and married to his fourth wife he was accused of killing his third wife Kathleen (originally it was believed she drowned in her bathtub).

But the authorities took a second look at her death when Peterson's fourth wife Stacy mysteriously disappeared in Oct. of '07.

Many started to believe that Drew Peterson killed both Kathleen and Stacy.

In this special I was watching the thing that was so disturbing was how callous and flippant Mr. Peterson was during the aftermath of Stacy's disappearance and during the murder trial of his third wife Kathleen—a trial where he was eventually convicted of her murder.

It seemed, to Mr. Peterson, that the whole thing was a big joke—and he seized the opportunity to grandstand, make jokes and basically to get his face in front of as many cameras as possible.

He even confessed to his pastor one time—*"I've done a lot of bad things in my life but I've never felt bad about anything I've done."*

Drew Peterson is what psychiatrists call a *psychopath*.

A psychopath is someone who is morally bankrupt and does whatever they want—especially if it will *benefit* them in some way.

This kind of person believes that rules don't apply to them, that they are above the law and as such they have absolutely no remorse for what they do to others because, at the end of the day, no one else matter but them.

They will do whatever it takes to make themselves happy and advance their objectives in life—and they feel completely justified in destroying anyone who gets in their way.

That profile seems to fit King Saul.

Saul was a man who was totally self-absorbed and driven by pride—

1 Samuel 18:5-9 (NKJV)

⁵ So David went out wherever Saul sent him, *and* behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants. ⁶ Now it had happened as they were coming *home*, when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments. ⁷ So the women sang as they danced, and said: "Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands." ⁸ Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *only* thousands. Now *what* more can he have but the kingdom?" ⁹ So Saul eyed David from that day forward.

At this point Saul began to see David as a rival, an enemy—someone that was going to take glory and power away from him and therefore someone that had to be eliminated.

We read in v.11 that Saul threw a spear at David twice to “pin him to the wall” but David escaped.

It goes on to say that Saul became more and more paranoid of David and obsessed with killing him.

He started to think of creative ways to get rid of David—even using his own daughters to destroy him.

1 Samuel 18:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Then Saul said to David, "Here is my older daughter Merab; I will give her to you as a wife. Only be valiant for me, and fight the LORD'S battles." For Saul thought, "Let my hand not be against him, but let the hand of the Philistines be against him."

You see Saul decided that, because everyone in Israel loved David, if he killed David everyone would turn on him and hate him (for a narcissist that's totally unacceptable)—so he decided to let the Philistines do his dirty work for him.

1 Samuel 18:18-21a (NKJV)

¹⁸ So David said to Saul, "Who *am* I, and what *is* my life *or* my father's family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?" ¹⁹ But it happened at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given to Adriel the Meholathite as a wife. ²⁰ Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. And they told Saul, and the thing pleased him. ²¹ So Saul said, "I will give her to him, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him..."

Saul knew his daughter Michal and believed that she was the kind of person that could bring down David in some way (we're not told how).

But once again Saul was not above using his own flesh and blood daughter to destroy David.

1 Samuel 18:21b-25 (NKJV)

²¹ ...Therefore Saul said to David a second time, "You shall be my son-in-law today."
²² And Saul commanded his servants, "Communicate with David secretly, and say, 'Look, the king has delight in you, and all his servants love you.'

Now therefore, become the king's son-in-law.' " ²³ So Saul's servants spoke those words in the hearing of David. And David said, "Does it seem to you *a light thing* to be a king's son-in-law, seeing I *am* a poor and lightly esteemed man?" ²⁴ And the servants of Saul told him, saying, "In this manner David spoke." ²⁵ Then Saul said, "Thus you shall say to David: 'The king does not desire any dowry but one hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to take vengeance on the king's enemies.' " But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

Saul reasoned, *"If David is killed in battle with the Philistines he's gone; and if he survives but loses in battle his popularity with the people will be destroyed—either way he's done!"*

However Saul's plan backfired on him in that David won all his battles!

Instead of eliminating David or diminishing his popularity, Saul's scheme only made him more loved, more popular and a greater hero in the eyes of the people of Israel.

In other words what Saul intended for evil—God used for good!

But notice that God only turned what Saul intended for evil into good in David's life because of David's attitude toward the situation—

1 Samuel 18:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ So when his servants told David these words, it pleased David well to become the king's son-in-law.

One pastor said of David,

"David had a humble heart. Many men would say, "Dowry? You want a dowry? You promised to give your daughter to the man who killed Goliath. If you want to see my dowry, look at the ten-foot grave in the Valley of Elah. That's enough of a dowry. I demand my rights!" But David humbly agreed to Saul's demand for a dowry...

David answered Saul's attempt at manipulation by taking control of the situation and being a humble servant, and by giving more than what was required."

1 Samuel 18:27-30 (NKJV)

²⁷ therefore David arose and went, he and his men, and killed two hundred men of the Philistines. And David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full count to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him Michal his daughter as a wife. ²⁸ Thus Saul saw and knew that the LORD *was* with David, and *that* Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him; ²⁹ and Saul was still more afraid of David. So Saul became David's enemy continually. ³⁰ Then the princes of the Philistines went out *to war*. And so it was, whenever they went out, *that* David behaved more wisely than all the servants of Saul, so that his name became highly esteemed.

It's interesting that, what others mean for evil, God can use for good if we will look to Him, trust Him and not seek to retaliate against those that try to do us wrong.

Matthew 5:38-42 (NKJV)

³⁸ "You have heard that it was said, '*An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.*'" ³⁹ But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. ⁴⁰ If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have *your* cloak also. ⁴¹ And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. ⁴² Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

There are many who believe that Jesus is advocating absolute pacifism here—but remember that Jesus cleansed the Temple so that's not what He's saying here.

The word 'resist' means "*to set against*"; 'evil person' is one who "*opposes or wrongs you.*"

So the Lord is saying, "*Don't set yourself against one who wrongs you*" or in other words, don't seek revenge when someone violates your rights.

Then Jesus gives 4 examples of how and in what circumstances this principle is to be applied in our lives.

1. When someone degrades you—v.39

Matthew 5:39 (NKJV)

...whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

Now many interpret this literally (explain)—but Jesus used it to illustrate what our response should be toward someone who puts us down by violating our dignity.

You see most people are right handed, and so for a person to slap you on your right cheek with their right hand means they would have to do it with the back of their hand.

The Jews felt that the most demeaning and degrading thing anyone could do to you was to slap you in the face with the back of their hand—this was what slave owners did to their slaves as a sign of contempt.

So Jesus is saying when your dignity is taken away and you're dishonored, degraded and humiliated—turn the other cheek—don't retaliate, don't respond with vengeance and evil.

Romans 12:17, 21 (NLT)

¹⁷ Never pay back evil with more evil...²¹ Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.

2. When someone falsely accuses you—v.40

Matthew 5:40 (NKJV)

⁴⁰ If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have *your* cloak also.

Apparently there is some basis for this suit—possibly someone thinks you’ve wronged or cheated them when in fact you haven’t and takes you to court.

A tunic was a long shirt like garment that extended down to your ankles and it was worn under your cloak or coat (outer garment).

Jewish law said you couldn’t sue someone for his coat since they used it to cover themselves at night and they would have no protection against the cold.

And so the picture here is someone so poor that all they have is the shirt on their back and someone who is so cruel and heartless that they are trying to take even that away from them.

Jesus is saying if someone sues you and takes your shirt don’t begrudge him, don’t seek revenge, don’t be bitter but instead show him you really didn’t intend to cheat him or wrong him by giving him your coat also.

In other words your witness is more important than your comfort.

3. When someone takes advantage of you—v.41

Matthew 5:41 (NKJV)

⁴¹ And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.

Roman law said a Roman soldier could compel you to carry his gear a mile.

This of course would be a degrading imposition as these soldiers would take advantage of everyone who happened to cross their path.

However instead of condemning the practice Jesus said to His disciples, “...*go two miles.*”

The law compels you to go one mile—love should compel you to go the second as a witness.

In other words if we only do what’s required of us we do no more than an unbeliever.

As a young person that would apply to chores at home; or if you’re an adult to your responsibilities at work—it certainly would apply to ministry.

But the context wasn’t to do this for someone you love like family or something you do for God in ministry—

Jesus commanded it to be done for those you don’t like or even those who are your enemies which in this case were hated Roman soldiers!

In other words, instead of focusing on your rights and your dignity focus on this lost soldier’s eternity—love him more than you love yourself.

4. When someone needs to borrow from you—v.42

Matthew 5:42 (NKJV)

⁴² Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

For most of the Christians I have met—certainly the ones in this church, generosity is something that characterizes their lives now that they have received Jesus.

And for those who still find themselves holding a little tightly to their purse strings listen to what God has said—

Deuteronomy 15:7-8 (NKJV)

⁷ "If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the gates in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother, ⁸ but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs... ¹⁰ You shall surely give to him, and your heart should not be grieved when you give to him, because for this thing the LORD your God will bless you in all your works and in all to which you put your hand.

Psalms 37:21 (NKJV)

²¹ The wicked borrows and does not repay, But the righteous shows mercy and gives.

James 2:15-16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit?

Proverbs 11:24-25 (NKJV)

²⁴ There is *one* who scatters, yet increases more; And there is *one* who withholds more than is right, But it *leads* to poverty. ²⁵ The generous soul will be made rich, And he who waters will also be watered himself.

Luke 6:35 (NKJV)

³⁵ But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.

I believe that this only applies to needs—not wants or desires. (Explain)

But having said that I need to balance it by saying that we shouldn't give to those who are lazy and refuse to work—

2 Thessalonians 3:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.

It's not always easy to determine if a person has a legitimate need or their need is something they have brought upon themselves through laziness and/or irresponsibility.

In those cases err on the side of grace—but remember if you do give to them do it with the right heart—not begrudgingly for God loves a cheerful giver.

And when you give don't hound them to pay it back—forget about it considering it a 'loan to the Lord'—

Proverbs 19:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD, And He will pay back what he has given.

Rights focus our attention on us whereas *mercy* focuses on others—those who have hurt, wronged or taken advantage of us.

It's natural for the world to retaliate—but it takes a Spirit-filled child of God to show mercy and loving-kindness to those who have wronged us.

This is how David treated Saul who was out to get him—he served him faithfully and did more than was required of him.

And because of it God turned Saul's evil against David into good and his esteem among the people rose higher and higher.

Don't retaliate against those who do you harm—in fact don't even run around defending yourself against those who speak evil against you.

If you seek to defend yourself God will let you—let Him be your defender!