

Standing Tall, Falling Hard

Day One – Hearing God

Today's reading: Page 129 through break on page 134

This reading covers: 1 Samuel 1-4

Summary: Samuel needed help learning to hear the voice of God.

Consider this:

Three times the Lord called on Samuel and three times the boy ran to Eli the priest. The fourth time, Samuel responded instead to God.

How many times do we turn to friends for answers instead of communicating with God himself? Why do we think callings come from human means rather than from God? How can we recognize when God is calling us to service, and what is our source of confirmation?

For Samuel, it was verbal communication with the Lord. Even in that day, it was a rare thing to happen, that a man should actually hear the voice of God. Today, we have the Scriptures. No human should have any excuse for not knowing the will of God. It is clearly written in the Bible.

For further reading: Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for giving us your word in Scripture. Help me to use it for guidance, for restoration and for praising you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day Two – Following the Crowd

Today's reading: Break on page 134 through break on page 138

This reading covers: 1 Samuel 8-10

Summary: God's people reject him as their leader so they can be like everyone else.

Consider this:

The Israelites wanted to be like everyone else. They wanted to be like the world. They wanted a king to rule them instead of God. By this choice, they were choosing the world over God. They could not have both. Think about a situation in which you made a choice to please man while your choice would obviously displease God. How would you change that in the future?

For further reading: Matthew 6:24; James 4:4-10

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, it is so easy to be a man-pleaser. But so often that is a choice that leads us farther away from you. Help me draw near to you so that you will draw near to me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day Three – God's Way

Today's reading: Break on page 138 through end of chapter

This reading covers: 1 Samuel 11-15

Summary: Saul failed to do things God's way and it cost him his crown.

Consider this:

Saul became afraid when Samuel didn't show up to make a sacrifice before a great battle. Saul decided not to wait. He himself made the sacrifice, even though this was outside the Lord's will. Saul was acting out of impatience. Like Saul, we sometimes get ahead of God even though it is contrary to his word and his call. Saul assumed everything would be all right if he went ahead and made a sacrifice in Samuel's absence. But only Samuel had the right to do it.

Saul also failed to destroy all the Amalekites. He wanted to preserve the best. Saul was operating out of greed. Sometimes we make bad decisions out of greed. Saul destroyed the useless and kept the best. He disobeyed God. This man who feared people was not afraid of God. Saul feared crowds, he feared armies and in future readings you will see that he also feared David. But for some reason, he did not fear God.

For further reading: Isaiah 55:6-9

Prayer:

Lord, help me to be a true delight to you. Let me be strong in obedience, no matter what the cost. Help me put away my fears, my impatience my greed and live only by faith. In Jesus' name, Amen.