

# Turn Not Aside from Following the Lord

I Samuel 12:1-25

Introduction:

- Leadership transitions- Samuel's swan song
  - Godly leadership commended- Pastor Barker
  - Continue fearing God, and serving God- even after we've blown it and made a mess!
- I. Samuel's godly leadership- v. 1-5
- a. Leadership transitions are not usually very easy
  - b. Samuel seems to be stepping down. He realizes that his role will now start to diminish
    - i. Samuel knew the nation would now begin to look to its king for leadership. Here he helped Israel make the transition from his leadership to Saul's leadership. Samuel made this clear when he said, "now here is the king" that his day was over, and Saul's day was beginning
    - ii. In this, Samuel showed himself as a truly godly man. He was willing to pass from the scene when God brought up another leader. Samuel did not grasp onto a position when God wanted to change it.
  - c. V. 2- He cannot hide his age or his sons- they are evident. The implication is that his sons are among the people and not in leadership (see I Sam 8:1-5)
  - d. Samuel makes his case as a godly leader- v. 5
    - i. His leadership is vindicated- there had been no real stain on his character or leadership- v. 3-4
    - ii. It's not always easy living in the "public eye"
    - iii. I have walked before you from my childhood to this day: Samuel remembered his humble beginnings as a child, dedicated to the Lord and serving Israel and the Lord at the tabernacle (1 Samuel 2:18; 3:1).
      - 1. I have been on display for you- testimony
      - 2. Shepherding, leading and guiding

- iv. You have not defrauded us or oppressed us: Israel knew Samuel was a good, godly leader. He did not lead them for what he could get from them, but for what he could give to them. Like Christ, he was a Servant-Leader- application for husbands,
- v. Illustr- If you were arrested for being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you?

II. God's Covenant Faithfulness- v. 6-13

- a. Samuel's plea/reasoning
- b. Samuel gives a brief history lesson of God's righteous acts
  - i. Samuel placed himself in the line of deliverers which God rose up beginning with Moses. Sadly, Israel was ungrateful for these past mercies and cried out for a king
  - ii. The role of chastisement- His discipline is just as righteous as His deliverance.
  - iii. Some familiar deliverers, and some not so familiar
    - 1. Jerubbaal was another name for Gideon (Judges 6:32).
    - 2. Bedan- Perhaps he was a deliverer known in their history, but not recorded in the Book of Judges. Or, Bedan may be a variant spelling or name for Barak, mentioned in Judges 4:6.
- c. The sharp contrast- v. 12- God was always faithful, even when Israel was not

III. Samuel's warning- v. 14-25

- a. Continue fearing God, and serving God- Reverence will lead to service
- b. Motivations for obedience
  - i. V. 14-15- The Lord is opposed to us when we disobey
  - ii. V. 24- "Consider". (Romans 12:1- reasonable service)
    - 1. Many people tend to magnify their problems and lose sight of what great things He has done for you.
    - 2. Many allow Satan to bring them in despair. There is a difference between conviction, and despair. Conviction always has hope.

- c. Obedience to God is the key: To life, to blessing, to happiness and fulfillment
- d. God affirms Samuel's speech- and ministry- Samuel prayed down a great thunderstorm- an obvious sign from God because such a storm was unseasonal during the time of wheat harvest. Talk about preaching up a storm! Samuel prayed up a storm!
- e. Fear of God- The people trembled in fear- sometimes this is good for God's people to do. We should have a healthy fear of God
- f. V. 20- They were conscious of their wickedness
  - i. One wrong turn did not put them out of God's plan forever. Israel should have never sought a human king. But now they had one, and Samuel simply called them to serve the Lord where they were at now.
  - ii. He did not want them to dwell on the sin of the past, but to go on walking with the Lord today.
- g. Even though their desire was seen as a great sin, God would still bless them if they walked in obedience to Him
- h. V. 20- don't let past sins and mistakes spoil your life! We should not minimize sin, but we also shouldn't minimize God's grace and mercy
- i. Samuel mentions the importance of prayer- especially intercessory prayer
  - i. Type of Christ
  - ii. Application for us as Christians to pray for our world- revival! Dan. 9
  - iii. The blessing of unceasing prayer is not the property of the preacher or leader alone. All can share in it. "Perhaps you will never preach, but you may pray. If you cannot climb the pulpit you may bow before the mercy-seat, and be quite as great a blessing." (Spurgeon)

Conclusion:

- Samuel's closing words in this chapter are foreshadowing exactly what would happen. Saul would be disobedient, Israel too would not remain faithful to God

- The warning for us is simple tonight- may we stay faithful to God- for consider how great things he hath done for you. We might stumble and fall along the way, but as Samuel said – Turn not aside from serving the Lord!
- “Never was a people more fully warned, and never did a people profit less by the warning.” (Adam Clarke)