

When Insecurities govern our choices

Theme: The danger of self-deception, partial obedience, and the fear of people.

Key Verse — 1 Samuel 15:22 “To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.”

Introduction The command of God in the first verse of this chapter would have been difficult to follow for many ethical even moral reasons. But Saul’s disobedience had nothing to do with ethics or morality. Samuel confronts Saul with his sin, but Saul began to make excuses justifying his actions.

Saul's story invites us to examine our own hearts. There are times, when what God requires of us is difficult. In those times, Is it possible to believe we are obeying God while quietly making compromises? Can our religious activities sometimes become a substitute for genuine obedience?

Reflection and Discussion

1. When we convince ourselves we are right (vv. 20–21)

Saul insisted that he had obeyed the Lord, even though he had deliberately spared Agag and the best of the livestock.

Why do you think Saul had such difficulty recognizing his own disobedience? In what ways might we be guilty of the same self-deception?

2. When religious activity replaces obedience (vv. 22–23)

Samuel declared that obedience is better than sacrifice. Why do you think God places greater importance on obedience than religious offerings? How might this happen in our own lives?

3. When the fear of people becomes greater than the fear of God (v. 24)

Saul finally admitted, “I was afraid of the men and so I gave in to them.” How does our desire for acceptance, approval, or avoiding conflict influence the choices we make? How can we learn to trust God when obedience may disappoint others?

4. When repentance is more about consequences than the heart (vv. 24–30)

Even after confessing his sin, Saul asked Samuel to honour him before the elders of Israel. What does this reveal about Saul's priorities? How can we distinguish genuine repentance from simply being sorry that we have been caught or that our actions have consequences?

5. When God invites us to examine our own hearts

Saul's downfall did not begin with one dramatic act of rebellion, but with choices that revealed a divided heart. Looking at your own walk with God, are there areas where you may be offering God only partial obedience? What might it mean for you to respond differently this week?

Closing Reflection What do you think is the central problem with Saul? What lesson or lessons might we take home from from this study of Saul's life?

Small Group Study
1 Samuel 15:20-30
October 29, 2026

当不安全感左右我们的选择

主题：自我欺骗、部分顺服，以及惧怕人的危险。

主题经文——撒母耳记上 15:22：「听命胜于献祭；顺从胜于公羊的脂油。」

引言

这一章第一节所记载的上帝命令，从伦理甚至道德的角度来看，会让许多人感到难以遵行。但扫罗的不顺服，并不是出于伦理或道德上的顾虑。撒母耳指出扫罗的罪时，扫罗却开始找借口，为自己的行为辩解。

扫罗的故事邀请我们省察自己的内心。有时候，上帝要求我们做的事并不容易。在这样的时刻，我们会不会以为自己是在顺服上帝，却暗地里作出妥协？我们的宗教活动，会不会有时取代了真正的顺服？

反思与讨论

1. 当我们说服自己：我没有错（20 – 21 节）

扫罗坚持说自己已经遵行耶和华的命令，尽管他明明留下了亚甲和上好的牲畜。

你认为，扫罗为什么这么难看清自己的不顺服？我们又可能在哪些方面，同样在欺骗自己？

2. 当宗教活动取代了顺服（22 – 23 节）

撒母耳宣告：顺服胜于献祭。你认为，上帝为什么看重顺服，过于宗教上的献礼？在我们的生活中，又可能怎样发生类似的事？

3. 当惧怕人超过敬畏上帝（24 节）

扫罗终于承认：「我因惧怕百姓，听从他们的话。」我们渴望被接纳、得到认同，或尽量避免冲突，这些心态会怎样影响我们的选择？当顺服上帝可能使别人失望时，我们怎样学习信靠祂？

4. 当悔改更在意后果，而不是内心（24 – 30 节）

即使承认了自己的罪，扫罗仍然请求撒母耳在以色列的长老面前尊重他。这反映出扫罗最在意的是什么？我们如何分辨真诚的悔改，和仅仅因为被揭发、或因为自己的行为带来后果而感到懊悔？

5. 当上帝邀请我们省察自己的心

扫罗的失败，并不是从一次惊天动地的悖逆开始，而是从一连串的选择中，显露出他那颗摇摆不定的心。回顾你自己与上帝同行的经历，有没有哪些方面，你对上帝只有部分的顺服？这一周，你可以怎样作出不同的回应？

结束反思

你认为扫罗最根本的问题是什么？从扫罗的一生和今天的查经中，我们可以带走什么功课？