

FRIDAY

*"AND THE SPIRIT OF GOD
DEPARTED FROM SAUL"*

SCRIPTURE:
I Samuel 16:13-23

There are no more tragic words than these! When God's Spirit gives a man up, that man is truly alone . . . Why had God departed from Saul? Read the chapters previous to this: Saul's disobedience, his inconsistency, his pride, his stubbornness were the qualities which forced God finally to abandon Saul and search for another king — David.

Notice, though, that even *before* His Spirit leaves Saul, God has already chosen another. Never is Israel without a spiritual leader.

And it is the same today. The Sauls of yesterday are feeling the desolation of God's departure in many ways: we have been unfaithful, proud, stubborn, filled with hypocrisy. Yet even now, God is raising up young Davids to fill the gap — youths who *personally* know the reality and power of Jesus Christ in their lives; who have actually wrestled the powers of evil and won through their faith; who are already qualified by their experience under God to stand before the taunts of the world and say, "The *Lord* will deliver you into my hand!" (17:45-47)

Let us thank God for such men who will be standing in the breach for us and for our Christ.

Prayer: O God, help me to do all I can to support these young princes of Thine; Lord, give them courage in this violent day as they stand before giant godlessness and face the taunts of unbelief, armed only with Thy Word which Thou hast made sufficient. AMEN

SATURDAY

"THE RESPONSE-ABILITY OF LOVE"

SCRIPTURE:
I Corinthians 13:1-7

We talk so often today of "Love's" freedom. How seldom we remember its obligation, its response, its uniqueness.

So much of society today seems to cry "Love!" while it simultaneously clamors and fights for "Self." People are so preoccupied with fulfilling only their own desires, that they cannot find the time to fulfill the needs of the ones closest to them.

A woman, in search of self-satisfying "love," turns from her family in blind determination. Hers is not a true love but indulgence of emotional restlessness. Genuine Godly love would set aside self as less important to seek the good of her children, and to bring a God-based happiness into those dependent upon her.

A man, in search of self-satisfaction, turns to the world for fame or fortune, forgetting that nothing can adore as a loving child, nor heal and protect like a cherished wife.

A child, in search of freedom for himself, runs rough-shod over the very people who willingly renounced selfish freedom to create a home in which he could be nourished, educated, loved.

Love is not a servant to be used — or manipulated. It is a gift . . . not what one takes, but something one gives. In this alone lies its uniqueness.

Prayer: Lord, help me to see love as giving to others a part of You that You have so richly given to me. As I have been received in my imperfection, Lord, so may I accept others in Thy love. AMEN

Daily Family Devotions

please take the time to read it first.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2021

"THE STRENGTH IS NOT IN ARMOR"

SCRIPTURE:
I Samuel 17:31-40; Philippians 4:13

For forty days, the Philistines mocked the armies of Israel across the valley. Their point of strength? *One* giant of a man — Goliath. Then, David comes into the picture: youth, vigor, assurance in God, and the confidence that God stood ready to help His people if they only trusted Him. At that moment, the silhouette of the battle changed.

But notice the typical action of King Saul: "Here, take *our* armor — " Of course it had not been effective against the Philistines for them — but Saul had become so used to only thinking in human terms he had forgotten the power of his God. Armor was all he had and so he tried to burden David with it. But David refused the cumbersome outfit. This was not how he intended to slay Goliath.

Today many of our well-meaning Christians, scholars and laymen alike, are trying to put on our youth the burdensome armor of a theological intellectualism — heavy, unwieldy, ineffective. And our youth are shrugging it off: "No, you have not won with it and it isn't what I need —" Instead, these young Christians are turning back to the simpler method of fighting evil: the impact of Jesus Christ directly on the mind and life of a sick world.

Prayer: Dear Lord, give me the confidence, too, to face the world armed with the sling of my faith, the rock of Thy Word and the assurance that You are by my side. AMEN

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TUESDAY

“THE POWER OF LOVE IN WORDS”

SCRIPTURE:

I Thessalonians 5:9-11

“Kind words are the music of the world. They have a power which seems to be beyond natural causes . . . It seems as if they could almost do in reality what God alone can do — soften the hard and angry hearts of men.”

“No one was ever corrected by sarcasm — crushed, perhaps, if the sarcasm was clever enough, but drawn to God . . . never.”

F.W. Faber

Have you ever had your path suddenly turn sunshiny because of a cheerful word? Have you ever wondered if this could be the same world because someone had been unexpectedly kind to you? You can make today the same for someone.

Start some kind word on its travels. There is no telling where the good it may do will stop.

Prayer: God, please help me to remember that it is not the great or news-worthy things that make up the happiness or sorrow of life, but it is the day-to-day life with other people. I pray, Lord, that in the smallest ways as well as in the greatest opportunities, I may guard my words, so that they may bless rather than hurt men. May they heal rather than injure, illuminate the good while diminishing the less-than-perfect. Make my love a cloak for those who stand defenseless before the world. AMEN

WEDNESDAY

“THE BLINDNESS OF BITTERNESS”

SCRIPTURE:

I Samuel 17:55-58; 16:14-18

The fact that Saul does not recognize David after all the hours he had played for the King in his chambers, is a very revealing indictment of Saul. Apparently Saul was so deep in a self-centered depression, he was not even aware of others near him. This is an unfortunate but typical characteristic of bitterness. We become so deeply immersed in our own problems, our own bitterness; we have no time to be aware of those whom God has appointed to minister unto us.

For even though God’s authority had departed from Saul, His mercy continued to reach out to him through David.

How much better it would have been for everyone if Saul, instead of only brooding about his physical dilemma, had sought God’s help in recovering the spiritual strength he had lost. How David could have helped him find peace again! Yet all he asked for was to be tranquilized — physically comforted by music.

It is strange how God’s love never quite abandons a man. In this case we see God using David not only as a replacement for Saul but as an available way back should Saul have asked for it. At the same time, God continues to provide protection for David. The love of God is constantly at work in many ways which we so often fail to see!

Prayer: Lord, I thank Thee for the ways in which You have ministered to me in my times of need. Sometimes I have actually felt You, other times I haven’t; yet I know Thou art always near if I only ask. AMEN

THURSDAY

“WHEN THE TROUBLE STARTS”

SCRIPTURE:

I Samuel 24:16-22, 24:1-13

Have you ever felt that God had deserted you simply because your life did not seem to be going as smoothly as you felt it should? Does it seem that it was only *after* God *called* you that you began to have problems?

Up until God called David, his life was smooth and uneventful, too. Not until after God chose him, did things become complicated and he found himself running for his life. (Read chapters 13-31)

Yet not once in these years — did David doubt God’s presence and love. The worse things got, the more David turned to God. The angrier Saul was, the more determined David was to convince him of his loyalty and love.

David seemed to be completely confident of the fact that in spite of the circumstances, God was there. Instead of turning away in bitterness, and resentment, he continued to seek God’s guidance and trust His will.

No wonder God loved him so. And small wonder that it was with David He chose to link His only Son, Jesus: “Out of the tribe of Judah, the house of David . . . the Messiah.” David was a beautiful example of sonship, love.

Prayer: Lord, I thank Thee for these that have gone before, for their example, their courage, their faith in Thee and for what Thou hast been able to do through ordinary, dedicated men. Make me worthy of serving Thee in love and obedience to the world. AMEN