

GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

Samuel - Hearing God in the Chaos

Week 6: Waiting on God

1 Samuel 13:1-15

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Jeff Griffin

This week's story from the life of God's servant Samuel showed us how the chaos we experience not only makes it harder to hear God, but can also tempt us to rush forward without even trying. We can learn from Saul's example what **not** to do when God seems to be taking His time.

Kicking It Off:

What was your favorite way to pass a lazy summer afternoon as a kid?

Discussion:

1. Read 1 Samuel 13:5-7. What is the setting? Describe the various reactions of the Israelites. What does this say about Saul as a leader?
2. Continue on reading 1 Samuel 13:8-10. What did Saul do during the seven prescribed days before Samuel was to arrive? What could he have been doing? Review the three activities of trusting in God that Jeff described in his sermon (Pray, Hope, Look). How might things have been different for Saul and his men if he'd done this?
3. Think back to the story of Saul's anointing from two weeks ago (1 Samuel 10:1-8). Samuel prophesied three signs that would demonstrate God was with Saul, and they came to pass. How do you think Saul came to take the matter of the burnt offering into his own hands now? Can you relate? In what way can this serve as a warning for you?
4. Read 1 Samuel 13:11-14. Jeff pointed out that Saul showed no remorse for what he had done. He did not repent, instead he justified his actions. It's both ironic and tragic. Again, what warning can you take from this?
5. Samuel declared that the next king would be a man after the Lord's heart. Read Psalm 37:7 for David's take regarding waiting on God. How does this contrast with Saul's approach?

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. (Psalm 37:7, NIV)

6. Do it yourself or trust in God – these are the two options. Which of the three activities Jeff shared (Pray, Hope, Look) do you want to work at doing more of? What specific step will you take in the next week to practice the spiritual discipline of trusting in God?

Wrapping Up:

Falling back on self-reliance, especially in a culture as individualistic and independent as ours, can be a great temptation. Pray for a spirit like David's to prevail among your group.

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. (Romans 12:12, NIV)