

Message #36**I Samuel 16:14-23**

Years ago, we had the privilege of sitting under the ministry of George Gardner of Calvary Church. George Gardner was pastor of Calvary Church in Grand Rapids for 13 years and we had the privilege of being under his teaching. He went home to be with the Lord in 1984. He would come to our school to do chapel services and also talk to those of us who were in the pastoral studies program. He pastored three churches in his ministry. One was in Massachusetts; one was in Ohio and one in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I will never forget something he told us one time about ministry. He said I will never fill out a resume and apply for some Pastoral job. If that is what the church is looking for, it won't be me. He never went looking for a church, churches came looking for him.

When God wants someone in some major leadership capacity, He will cause it to happen in His sovereign way, in His sovereign will and in His sovereign time. God does not need our help to orchestrate His sovereign will. In fact, He will orchestrate things in His ways which will probably turn out to be ways we would never imagine.

David had just been anointed by Samuel to be King of Israel (I Sam. 16:12-13). Now a question that naturally arises is how is that going to logistically happen? How will God orchestrate things so David becomes a King?

He certainly does not become a king instantly and immediately after this anointing. So what is God going to do to bring this to reality? Now it is certainly true from this time forward that David becomes the central figure of Israel's history at this time. But how exactly is God going to get him to become king?

There is a powerful lesson to see and learn here:

GOD IS SOVEREIGN OVER EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE AND WHEN HE WANTS TO MOVE ONE OF HIS PEOPLE TO AN EXALTED POSITION OF LEADERSHIP, HE WILL DO IT IN HIS TIME AND HIS WAY.

When it comes to God's will, no one needs to get caught up with some game of manipulation. God's people can wait on God and depend on God to work His will and move in His way and His time. That does not mean we do not need to be faithful and walk through doors, but it does mean we may rest in the sovereignty of God. That point is very clear from this text.

I am certain that when David was anointed King by Samuel, he must have wondered well how is this all going to work out? I have been a shepherd boy and how exactly will things happen to make me the next King of Israel, when Saul is the King of Israel? Well the process starts here. There are seven historical observations we want to see:

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #1 – God sovereignly permits His Spirit to leave Saul and a Demonic Spirit to terrorize Saul. **16:14**

David would have had no knowledge whatsoever that God was doing this. It is important to observe that as long as the Holy Spirit was with Saul, no evil Spirit could get near him. No New Testament believer who has God's Spirit in him or her ever has to worry about being possessed by a demon. Demons could not even do that in O.T. times.

Now the Spirit of God in the O.T. came upon a person to enable them and empower them to carry out a Divine task or assignment. The issue in the Old Testament is not New Testament salvation, but Old Testament service. **So when we read that the Spirit came upon Saul and then left Saul, God is not talking about one losing salvation; he is losing his service.**

But what we do learn here is that the sovereignty of God is even over demons. God is sovereign over Satan and demons and God permitted a demon to "terrorize" Saul. That Hebrew word means that God caused an evil Spirit being to scare Saul and frighten Saul to the point that he was terrified (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 133). God permitted a Satanic spirit to attack Saul. This was a Divinely commanded "supernatural assault" on Saul.

One writer said that Saul literally became the subject of hateful, violent fits of anger in which he lost his reason and actually gave way to a form of temporary insanity. When someone is terrified and has hateful, violent outbursts, that is certainly not something produced by the Spirit of God.

There is something important to see here. If a believer keeps dabbling in disobedience, bad things can happen. You can end up an unstable wreck.

We need to remember God is sovereign over the Satanic world. If demons are permitted to attack a believer, the believer needs to stay faithful because God has a purpose in it. He may be proving us or testing us. He did with Job and He did with Saul.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #2 – God sovereignly causes Saul's servants to come up with a solution to help Saul. **16:15-16**

Again David has no knowledge of any of this. God is doing this. Now most counselors know this truth that when someone is mentally troubled, you try to get their attention away from self and on to something else.

The servants of Saul knew that an evil spirit was troubling Saul and terrorizing him. So they came up with an ingenious solution. You need to find someone who is very skilled at playing a harp who can come in and play soothing music for you when the evil spirit is here and you will be well.

It is interesting that demons don't like soothing music; they like hard rock music, the kind being played today in many churches. Now let's face it. This is not your normal solution to demonic paranoia. Today most counselors would say let's get him on some medication.

The truth is there is medicinal healing power in soft music. One old Bible teacher used to say, soothing music can calm the disturbed person and harsh music can disturb a calm person.

John Kitto, a Biblical scholar of the 1800's, said that in the Memoires of the French Royal Academy of Sciences of 1707 are many documented accounts of people who had various diseases that no one could cure by any remedy who were cured by listening to soft, musical harmony. For example, Philip the 5th of Spain was seized with total depression, which made him incapable of even appearing before any public meeting. He would not shave or even get dressed and spent time totally dejected. His wife and queen contacted the celebrated musician Farinelli, who was one of the greatest singers in opera history, and invited him to Spain. She had a concert room set up next to the king's apartment. Farinelli played a beautiful song and the king immediately invited him into his room and asked him what he could give him. Farinelli said all he wanted was for the king to permit his attendants to shave him and dress him so that he could go before the council. The king agreed and the depression never hit him again. Every night Farinelli would play and sing and the king was delivered (*Kitto's Daily Bible Illustrations*, Vol. 1, p. 677).

Do not ever underestimate the power of soothing, God-honoring music. It can soothe and heal. It does have medicinal value. Billy Sunday came out of a bar in Chicago one night and heard the sweet music of hymns being sung at church and God used that to save him.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #3 – God's sovereignty causes Saul to agree to this possible solution. **16:17**

Again, David knows nothing about this. Saul agreed to have someone play music but he specified that he wanted someone skilled to play the music. He did not want some beginner who had just started taking harp lessons.

Frankly, I am not sure David ever took a harp lesson. He probably just played and became skilled and never dreamed he would be brought in to play before a king.

David was the kind of man who did his best at whatever he did. Whether it was playing a harp or watching sheep or practicing with a sling shot, he was focused and always did his best. God has ways of spreading a person's reputation so he becomes known as one very skilled and He will do it at just the right moment.

For Saul and his servants, this has nothing to do with getting a replacement king. This was all about getting rid of an evil Spirit who was terrorized Saul. So the request of Saul is to go find a man who can play the harp well and bring him to me.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #4 – God sovereignly causes the servants to recommend David. **16:18**

This is certainly no coincidence; this is the sovereign hand of God. God wanted David in this position, not initially as the king but as a harp player. Now why did God want David in this role?

- 1) God wanted David near Saul so he could be brought into the public eye. He will be the next king.
- 2) God wanted David near Saul so that David could learn first-hand about life as king. He certainly would learn about key people and relationships. This is a good education for him.

We must not ever see our present tasks as menial or insignificant. Whatever we do, do it at the best level. Whether it is practicing a piano or working at a job—do your best for the glory of God because God is monitoring us and we don't know what He might do with us.

Keep in mind Saul has asked for them to bring a man who can play well. The servants said they found a guy and he has more attributes than just being able to play well. Now in **verse 18**, the servants give Saul an amazing description of David:

- 1) He is the son of Jesse from Bethlehem.
- 2) He is a skillful musician. David was very skilled at playing the harp.
- 3) He is a mighty man of valor. David was a courageous man who defended sheep (17:32-36).
- 4) He is a warrior. David was not a coward and he would not run or back down from a fight.
- 5) He is prudent in his speech. He was wise in speech. He wrote prayers, songs, things of God.
- 6) He is handsome. Nothing wrong with looking good as a young person.
- 7) He has the presence of God with him. In everything David did, God was with him.

When you listen to these guys describe David, almost everyone would say get this guy, I want to see him and meet him.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #5 – God sovereignly causes Saul to send for David. **16:19**

Saul sent some messengers to Bethlehem to get David. They went to Jesse who obviously informed them he was with the flock. David was out working and his job was to tend his flock. That is exactly what he was doing when these guys show up at his house and want him to go with them. David is not trying to manipulate any of this.

He had been anointed by Samuel to be the next king, but he did not immediately quit his day time job. He was doing his work faithfully.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #6 – God sovereignly causes Jesse to send David to Saul. **16:20**

Jesse took a donkey and loaded it with bread and a jug of wine and a young goat and sent it to Saul. Now Jesse knew that Samuel had anointed his son and I am certain that this generous gift was more than just something mannerly. It was designed to get David into the good graces of Saul.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #7 – God sovereignly causes Saul to accept David. 16:21-23

David left the field and went in and met Saul and attended to Saul by obviously playing music.

Saul responded in four ways:

Way #1 - Saul loved David. 16:21a

Way #2 - Saul promoted David. 16:21b

Way #3 - Saul wanted David. 16:22

Saul went through proper channels. He contacted his father requesting that he let him stay.

Way #4 - Saul was refreshed by David. 16:23

Some people are so refreshing and others are so draining. David would come in and play the harp and Saul was refreshed and the evil spirit would leave him.

Now who do you think is behind all of this? This is all of the sovereignty of God.

LESSONS:

- 1. No matter what the task, no matter how menial the task, do your best at it for God.**
- 2. We may always remember that we do not need to manipulate anything because God will put us where He wants us. We just need to wait on Him.**
- 3. Promotion to higher positions comes as a result of being faithful in lower positions.**
- 4. Next time your temper flares, turn on some soft music.**