

230906-4 1Sa 15, Rebellion & Stubbornness Costs Saul the Kingdom—CThurman

Saul's son Jonathan apparently prefers to stick his fingers in the eyes of the enemy as opposed to letting them rest in the land of Israel.

What a parallel thought we can draw from this! As long as the enemy lives within (that old, corrupt, natural man) we should never yield or let it rest, but combat against it.

Twice Jonathan came against the Philistines to smite a garrison of the Philistines. First with his one thousand-man force (13.3), and then with only he and his armorbearer. (14.1, 6, 13)

In that first skirmish with the Philistines, and Saul's first as king of Israel, for failing to wait on the LORD (for Samuel's coming to him at the appointed time to Gilgal [comp. 1Sa.10.8 & 13.8-14]), the LORD took from him the blessing of the kingdom continuing in his house. And in the next conflict Saul acts rashly to put his men that are involved in the conflict with the Philistines under an oath so that they may not eat *any* food until evening. This tempered the victory of Israel over the Philistines from what it could have been. The oath also puts the life of Jonathan in jeopardy because, not knowing of the oath which his father had put all his men under, he has eaten some honey that he found along the way. For this Saul would have slain Jonathan but the men delivered him.

The remainder of the chapter records that Saul took control of the kingdom over Israel, and troubled all the enemies of Israel on every side; to the southeast (Moab), the east (Ammon), the southeast (Edom), the north (Zobah), and to southwest (Philistines); that there are sons and daughters, a wife and cousin which shall be dealt with as we continue to read through this book of 1Samuel.; and that Saul continued to enlist into his service all the strong and valiant sons of Israel.

Chapter 15

1 ¶ Samuel also said unto Saul,

Evidently, another occasion arose for Samuel and Saul to meet together at Gilgal. (v.33)

The LORD sent me to anoint thee [to be] king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD.

What is Samuel saying? The LORD called Saul into the service of the king to do His will, to do a work, particularly a work that includes leading Israel after the LORD as well as delivering Israel from its enemies.

If the Lord has called us by His grace, then He has a work for us to do. He has a service within His kingdom that we are to fulfill. Therefore, we are to hear him. *To hearken* means to obey His commandments or to be subject to His will.

2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember [that] which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid [wait] for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.

The LORD never allows His word to fail to accomplish what He has said that He will do.

Is.55.6 ¶ Seek (Qal imper.) ye the LORD while he may be found, call (Qal imper.) ye upon him while he is near:

7 Let the wicked forsake (Qal fut., the wicked shall forsake) his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return (Qal fut., he shall return) unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

8 For my thoughts [are] not your thoughts, neither [are] your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

9 For [as] the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper [in the thing] whereto I sent it.

The LORD spoke against Amalek long ago (perhaps nearly 500 years ago), when Israel had not long been delivered from Egypt.

Ex.17.8 ¶ Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

Understand this: Amalek's assault against Israel was unprovoked. For no reason whatsoever Amalek fought against Israel, perhaps only to show their preeminence as a great nation, coming against Israel as a bully would pick a fight with one weaker than he, simply because he can.

...

14 And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this [for] a memorial in a book, and rehearse [it] in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

15 And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi (The LORD my Banner):

16 For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn [that] the LORD [will have] war with Amalek from generation to generation. (Until Amalek is utterly put out of memory.)

Deu.25.17 Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt;

18 How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, [even] all [that were] feeble behind thee, when thou [wast] faint and weary; and he feared not God.

19 Therefore it shall be, when the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee [for] an inheritance to possess it, [that] thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget [it].

The LORD even used a false prophet to tell of Amalek's sure and future destruction.

Nu.24.20 And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek [was] the first of the nations; but his latter end [shall be] that he perish for ever.

Amalek is twice mentioned in the Book of Judges. (Jud.3.13, the king of Moab [Eglon] gathered Ammon and Amalek to fight against Israel, and so the LORD raised up Ehud to deliver them; 5.14, as Barak fought in Zebulun so Ephraim went against Amalek.) After David's warfare Amalek will not be mentioned again. (cf. 2Sa.8.12)

3 Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

The LORD revealed to Saul that He has called him to do His bidding, and in this instance he is commanded to smite Amalek.

There is a danger for confusing the nation of Israel with the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. The churches of Jesus Christ have never become state churches so that they might take arms as a governmental power to wage war against any that differ in politics or religion. But this is precisely what state churches of Roman Catholicism and Protestantism has done.

This is one of those places where the unbelieving read this and claim how cruel the God of the Bible is. But this was the nature of warfare. It was what Amalek did to Israel, and the LORD would have Israel do to Amalek. (see above, Due.25.18)

4 And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in Telaim,

Telaim is thought to be the same as the city in Judah, Telem. (Jos.15.24) First citation of Amalek shows them perhaps in the south of Canaan. (vss. 6, 7) Another text would lend to the idea that Amalek was centrally located around Ephraim. (cf. Jud.4.11) But perhaps Amalek is quite thoroughly entrenched in Canaan so that the conflict even comes into the northern

area of Canaan. (Nu.24.21, 22; 1Sa.15.12, so that Saul comes to mount Carmel.

two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah.

Again, we see a division between the men of Israel and the men of Judah.

1Sa 11:8 And when he numbered them in Bezek, the children of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.

Perhaps the distinction being shown between the northern and southern inhabitants of Canaan is to show how the entire nation is subject to their one and only king.

5 And Saul came to a city of Amalek, and אָרַב laid wait in the valley.
set an ambush

6 And Saul said unto the Kenites, Go, סוּר depart, get you down from among
turn aside, remove

the Amalekites, lest I אָסַף destroy you with them: for ye shewed חַסֵּד kindness
add, gather mercy, kindness, favor

to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.

7 And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah [until] thou comest to Shur, that [is] over against Egypt.

The geography of the earth since the days of Eden in the Genesis has changed since. (cf. Ge.10.25)

Ge.2.10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

11 The name of the first [is] Pison: that [is] it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where [there is] gold ...

I don't know if reference to Havilah is to say 'from the north until you come to Shur in the south.' Shur is in the south. But the wording does seem to mean that the comprehensively smitten.

8 And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

9 But Saul and the people קָמַל **spared** **Agag, and the best of the sheep,**
pitied, had compassion on
showed mercy to (v.15)

and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all [that was] good, and

would not utterly destroy them: but every thing [that was] קָלִיל **vile**
despised, lightly esteemed
cursed, accursed

and refuse, מָסַם **that they destroyed utterly.**
faint (perhaps the sick, lame, diseased)

So pity was shown to whom the LORD cursed and the best was preserved.

10 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying,

11 It repenteth me that I have נָחַם **set up** **Saul [to be] king: for he is turned**
caused to reign

back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it

grieved קָרַח **Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.**
displeased, angered, burned

Now, not only will the kingdom not continue with the house of Saul (cf. 1Sa.13.13, 14), but the kingdom is taken from Saul.

It repenteth me – The LORD *changeth not*.

Nu 23:19 God [is] not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do [it]? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

1Sa 15:29 And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he [is] not a man, that he should repent.

Mal 3:6 For I [am] the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Jas 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

So, we understand that God has not changed what He has determined from eternity to do, but that only as it is understood among men do we perceive a change in the administration of His will. For example, the LORD exalts kings to their places of authority, and He removes them, neither of which constitutes a change in the eternal purpose.

12 And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

Saul evidently thinks that he is ready to meet Samuel with the good news of his exploits. Sin blinds the eyes.

13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him,
(to Gilgal)

Blessed [be] thou of the LORD:

Saul seems to be saying, what a blessing it must be for you that the word of the LORD has been accomplished just as you said.

As we turn away from the will of God, we cannot perceive that into which we are about to fall.

2Pe.1.9 But he that lacketh these things (he has turned away from the knowledge of Christ and the Divine power that is working within) is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

The heart has deceived us. We are blinded by sin. We convince ourselves that everything is fine when in reality it is not well at all with our souls. And we dance along with the world adding to corruption more corruption, which begets nothing but death.

Ja.1.15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Ga 6:8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Willful, presumptuous sins bring chastening to the disobedient child of God.

*Heb 10:26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,
27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.*

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance [belongeth] unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

31 [It is] a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Only the grace of God can work to restore us to a right standing with Christ. The LORD alone works repentance in us to the acknowledging of the truth. Brethren, repentance is not in our power except God grant us the grace for it.

In the parable of the prodigal son it was the *younger* son, the second born son, representing the born again son that would have his father give to him his part of the inheritance. And after receiving that he decided to go live as *he pleased*. And as the parable goes this son spent all his substance *living it up with the world* until he had wasted all his substance. But then there came a mighty famine that brought him down to the lowest of places, feeding the swine; so low he even desired to eat their slop. Sin robs the child of God of all fruit he could have enjoyed in Christ: love, joy, faith, peace, contentment, patience, temperance, goodness, humility, etc. And for seeking Him first the Lord would have granted the other things necessary for life too, food, clothing, shelter, etc. (cf. Mt.6.31-33)

Then of this prodigal son we read these words, '*And when he came to himself ... (Lk.15.17)*'

Ac 11:18 ... Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

2Ti 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

26 And [that] they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Watch against the deceitfulness of sin. We have no idea to what ends it will lead us. It is true that every child of God is tempted to sin.

1Jn.1.8 ¶ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

But being tempted to sin is not an excuse for sin. Sin should find less and less outward expression in the mortal body as the child of God grows in the grace and knowledge of Christ. But even that said, there are sins which involve the body that the child of God ought never commit. (cf. Eph.5.3) But as for the old man, and the conflict that is in the heart and mind, that will not cease or weaken until this body has breathed its last breath. Hopeless? Absolutely not. The Spirit of God working in us, we have tasted of Christ’s goodness and hope for that which is coming in the resurrection.

For sin Saul is now blinded to the will of God. He doesn’t know that partial obedience is no obedience at all.

	קוּם	
<i>I have</i>	performed	the commandment of the LORD.
	established, stirred up, confirmed, upholden	

If ever there was an example of the deceitfulness of sin, this is it.

*Heb 3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.
13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

Saul has a brazen disregard (defined as ‘contemptuous boldness’) to the word of God. And the LORD shall severely chastise him for this.

		קוּל		צֹאן
14 And Samuel said, What [meaneth] then this		bleating		of the sheep in
		sound, voice		flock
mine ears, and the	קוּל		בְּקֹר	
lowing	of the		oxen	which I hear?
sound			herd	

How is it that I can hear livestock that has been utterly destroyed unless of course that livestock was not destroyed?

1Sa 15:3 Now go (Saul) and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people
(implying 'the people')

נָמַל

spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen,
pitied, had compassion on,
showed mercy to (v.9)

to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

It seems that Saul is placing the blame on *the people* while at the same time justifying their actions because they have good intentions.

I don't understand that Saul came to this hard-hearted condition in a single moment. He came to this place as a result of negligence. He allowed so many little, seemingly insignificant things to be left undone. He thought some sins to be trivial so that finally the LORD must bring severe judgment against him.

More often than not it is so much negligence, so much closing of the ears, so much covering of the eyes, not wanting to know, not wanting to pay attention that brings us to a flagrant disregard of God's word, and the necessity to bear serious judgment at the hand of the Lord.

רָפָה, Hiphil imper.

16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I
Be idle, be still, forsake, let alone

נָגַד

will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night.
utter, declare, report (to)

And he said unto him, Say on.
(Saul) Speak!

17 And Samuel said, When thou [wast] little in thine own sight, [wast] thou not [made] the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?

As if Samuel were saying, ‘Remember this?’

‘While he was little in his own eyes, all things kept working together for his good. It is not the grace of God that puffs up, but the wind of self-conceit. The kingdom had come to him, not because he had sought it, or wrought for it. It was to him the gift of God. He was deeply conscious of the insignificance of the tribe to which he belonged, and the smallness and poverty of his family (chap. 9.21). But grace delights to lavish its wealth and honour upon the weak and unworthy (2Cor. 12.9, 10). They that be whole need not a physician.’
Handfuls on Purpose, Eerdmans Publishing Co., vol.2, series 5, pp.46, 47

**18 And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the
in a way**

sinnners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

**19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon
hear snoop**

didst fly, Qal fut. of the verb טָוַף, tss. *to fly* (2), *to rail* (1, marg. *flew*).
The masc. noun טָוֵף, is tss. *fowl*, *ravenous*, and *ravenous bird*.,

the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?

Qal part. pret.

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

Saul is of the mind that if he does something good, though it contradicts the word of God, this cancels out, or trumps his act of disobedience. It should come as no surprise to us that this is the practice of the unbelieving world. But there might be baptized, believing, church-related disciples of Jesus Christ that are also of the mind that provided they keep the *letter* of the law, pay their tithes, give sacrificially of their time, read the Bible now and then, attend some of the church services, that God will overlook their disobedience to what are the clear commandments of Christ in Scripture.

22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD [as great] delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD?

Does the Lord delight in offerings and sacrifices which come from the disobedience?

Mt 23:23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier [matters] of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Behold, to obey [is] better than sacrifice, [and] to hearken than the fat of rams.

hear

attend, mark

to hearken, Hiphil infin. of the verb קָשַׁב, also tss. to attend, to mark, to mark well, to cause to hear, to regard, to incline.

23 For rebellion [is as] the sin of witchcraft,
bitterness divination

rebellion, מַרְדּוּ, a masc. noun tss. bitter, a rebel, rebellion, rebellious.

witchcraft, קְסָם, a masc. noun tss. rewards of divination, divination, witchcraft, divine sentence.

and stubbornness **[is as] iniquity and idolatry.**
impudence (Inter. Bible) wickedness teraphim, images

stubbornness, Hiphil infin. of the verb פָּצַר, *to press, to urge, to be stubborn.*

iniquity, tss. also *mischief, wickedness, unrighteous, vain.*

Witchcraft, iniquity and idolatry refer to notable outward sinful acts against the LORD. Rebellion and stubbornness are the things that work in the heart. By Samuel, the LORD reveals the secret things of Saul's heart. Saul is purposefully rebelling and resisting the will of God. He is unwilling to confess his sins against the LORD.

Pr 28:13 He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh [them] shall have mercy.

Because thou hast **מָאַס** **the word of the LORD,**
rejected
despised, cast away, contemned
refused, disdained, abhorred

he hath also rejected thee from [being] king.

Saul, since you will not have me to rule over your life you will not rule over my people. Such persons are unfit, unsuitable for ruling over others.

2Ti 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with [him]: if we deny (refuse) [him], he also will deny (refuse) us ... Christ will refuse us to do what? Isn't the answer, 'to rule with Him' in the coming kingdom?

24 ¶ And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned:

Consider all that it required for Saul to finally come clear of his sins against the LORD. He was so stubborn, so very rebellious.

for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

Saul knew what he was doing against the LORD.

25 Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.

pardon, Qal imper. of the verb נָשָׂא, tss. to bear, to carry, to forgive, to lay, to lift up, to pluck.

First of all, Saul never did repent. He was only sorry that he was caught. This is parallel to what Joshua had to do to find the transgressor, Achan. Achan was finally discovered. Achan never repented. (read Joshua ch. 7) And like Achan that bore his judgment so Sual must now bear the consequences for his sins against the LORD.

26 And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the

כַּנֶּפֶף	מְעִיל
skirt	of his mantle, and it rent.
edge, border	robe, coat

28 And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, [that is] better than thou.

29 And also the	Strength	of Israel will not	שָׁקֵר
	(margin, Eternity)		lie
			deal falsely, be vain

Strength, נִצְחָה, a masc. noun tss. always, constantly, perpetual, for ever, victory.

וְנִנְחֵם

nor repent: for he [is] not a man, that he should repent.

be comforted, be eased

(so that the LORD might deviate from His word.)

The time is past for the LORD to turn back and restore Saul to continue as king over Israel.

30 Then he said, I have sinned: [yet] honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God.

31 So Samuel turned again after Saul; and Saul worshipped the LORD.

At this time, to bring an end to the celebrations for Israel's victory over the Amalekites, Samuel stood with Saul before the elders of Israel, very likely offering the offerings, all as if there was no problem between him and the LORD.

Samuel chose to honor Saul because of the office which Saul held, though Saul proved himself to be unfit for it and even knowing that the LORD had determined to remove him and install another man into that office.

What an example this should be to Christians today. Many Christians dishonor those in authority because they prove themselves unfit for offices of authority, yet the same God commands that His children unconditionally honor the king. There is no *if* in this commandment.

1Pe 2:17 Honour all [men]. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

How we need wisdom to pray for wisdom, to know how to honor those in authority that are unfit for office and do so wickedly.

32 ¶ Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately.

'daintily,' Young's Literal Translation of the Holy Bible

delicately, מַעֲדָה, a masc. noun found four times in the OT, tss.
dainties, delicately, delight.

Agag, because he had not been immediately executed perhaps thought that his life was being spared.

סָוַר, Qal pret.

And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is

past.

departed, turned aside, taken away, removed, gone, put away.

bitterness, the adj. מָר, tss. *bitter, bitterness* (1Sa.1.10; 15.32), *angry, chafed, discontented* (22.2), *heavy, Mara* (Ru.1.30).

33 And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

hewed ... in pieces, Piel (intensive act.) fut. of the verb חָטַט, only this once in the OT.

34 Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house to Gibeah of Saul.

35 And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death:

At this point both men went to their homes. This text might lead us to think that these two never meet again, but that would not be true. While Samuel never came to Saul after this, Saul shall come to Samuel. (cf. 1Sa.19.24)

nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul:

mourned, Hithpael (reflexive act.) pret. of the verb אָבַל, tss. *to mourn* (1Sa.16.1), Hithpael part.; *to lament* (1Sa.6.19).

and the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

Though Saul was called to serve God as king over the nation of Israel, it was important that he obeyed His commandments. All of the good intentions,

the burnt offerings and sacrifices, going through the motions of service to God amounted to nothing if in his heart he was rebellious and stubborn to that which the LORD commanded. So also it is for the child of God. Though he has been called into the service Christ all he does, as important as it might be, is nothing if he lives in a state of rebellion and stubbornness to the will of God for his life. How he serves is as important as who he serves. We could consider the parable of the king reckoning with his servant. (cf. Mt. 18.23-35) In this parable the servants are in service to the same king. The *dealings* between these servants (their interactions with each other) are as important as the service they think to render to their king.

In this parable the king forgave one of his servants that owed him a debt that he could not possibly ever have hoped to repay. But then that very same servant which had a fellow servant that owed him a debt so menial in comparison to what the king had forgiven him, turned to deal harshly with his *fellow*, casting him into prison until he should repay the debt.

For maltreatment of his fellow servant, the king delivered the graceless servant over to the tormentors until he paid all that was due unto him.

Or perhaps we could consider the parable of the talents. Like the first parable, how the talent is managed is as important as the talent itself.

One servant received ten talents, another five, and another one. Whether it was ten talents, five talents, or one, there was but one requirement for them all: faithfulness.

All service is important. It is good to support the church with our means. It is good to sacrificially give of our time. It is good to come to the services of the church for the times of corporate worship. But it is nothing if we are rebellious and stubborn to that which the LORD has revealed in His word. Saul lost the kingdom. Will we, for unfaithfulness, lose our part in that coming kingdom?

2Th.1.5 ¶ Your patience and faith [... is] a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer ...

2Ti.2.12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with [him]: if we deny [him], he also will deny us:

*2Pe.1.10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:
11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*