

“Responding to Rejection!”

I. **INTRO:**

- A. Kelly & I went a few weeks ago on a date night to the *Lamb’s Player Theater* in Coronado to see *The Rivalry* (re: The Lincoln-Douglas Debates)
1. The Illinois legislature using *an obscure statute* sent **Stephen A. Douglas** to the U.S. Senate instead of **Abraham Lincoln**, although Lincoln had won the popular vote.
 2. When a sympathetic friend asked Lincoln **how he felt**, he said, “*Like the boy who stubbed his toe: I am **too big to cry** and **too badly hurt to laugh.**”*
 - a) How do you deal with **rejection**? Samuel will give us a great example to follow.
- B. I don’t claim to be a Political **analyst**, Political **theorist**, or Political **economist**, but simple observations point to the fact that the fight no longer seems to be between **Republicans & Democrats** in the US. *Many seem to be disappointed with **both parties!***
1. Last year a populist movement broke out across our nation called **The Tea Party Movement**. It’s based on the principles of individual liberty, limited government and economic freedom.
 2. In **1st Sam 8** we have the same frustration at hand with the Israelites & their form of gov. We’ll watch the radical shift from a **Theocracy** to a **Monarchy**.
 - a) **Theocracy** = a system of gov in which priests rule in the name of God.
 - b) **Monarchy**=[Gk. *monarkhia* the rule of one] A form of gov with a monarch at the head.
 3. The difference though is their rejection of **God** governing them.
 - a) We already did that awhile ago. :(

II. **RESPONDING TO REJECTION!**

- A. **REJECTION!** (1-5)
- B. (1) This is a **new generation**. They have only heard from their parents how the Lord delivered them from their enemies.
1. They have been reared in comparative **peace & safety**.
 2. They took for granted the privileges of the **Theocracy** w/o properly understanding **the source** of their many benefits!
- C. (1-3) Samuel grew older, the time came to pass the mantle of leadership to another.
1. Samuel’s about 65 years of age & is grayheaded(12:2)

2. I'm sure he hoped it would be **his sons** whom he already made to be judges.
3. But they were taking bribes...**unraveling** justice **instead of upholding** it.

D. (3) **Eli's sons** yielded to the *lust of the flesh*; **Samuel's sons**, were *lovers of money*.

E. **Turned aside** - How many degrees does a plane have to *turn aside* to be **off course & miss its destination**? Just 1!

F. I see a big difference between **Samuel's** fathering/parenting, & **Eli's**.

1. **Eli** was judged for his poor fathering skills, **Samuel** never was.
2. I think this is a case of children going bad, "choosing their own way", yet not because of the parents.
3. Sometimes it **is** the parents fault...**but** likewise, sometimes it **isn't**.
 - a) **Don't be so quick to judge other peoples children!**
4. Also, **a good name is to be chosen** - but isn't a guarantee they will walk with the Lord. [**Joel** = *Jehovah is God* & **Abijah** = *Jehovah is my Father*]
5. **Train up a child in the way that he should go. And when he is old he will not depart from it.** Prov.22:6 [is a **principle** not a **promise**]
 - a) **We all know of some kids where this didn't happen** - This may be because of the **self-will** or **deliberate disobedience** of an individual who chooses to go the way of folly, instead of the way of wisdom.
 - (1) Yet parents, this is a generally true principle, for most children.

G. (5) **Was it really wrong to ask for a king? No!**

1. **A Monarchial** form of the Theocracy had been foreseen & planned for by God.
2. Gen.35:11 **Also God said to him: "I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body.**
3. **Read** Deut.17:14,15.

H. **So, why were they wrong for asking?**

I. **They** were rejecting God's leadership. **They** lacked faith in God. **They** wanted to be like other nations. **They** wanted a king to lead them into battle.

J. **RESPONDING TO REJECTION!** (6-9)

K. (6) Forced retirement because of his age. No one ever had a complaint about him(12:2-5). He had faithfully discharged his duties. *What ingratitude!*

1. **The thing displeased Samuel** - How do you handle **rejection**?
How would you **forced retirement**?

L. Let's draw the comparison between how **2 bible characters** handled **rejection!**¹

1. **Cain** - The **Wrong** response to Rejection!

- a) **Some common responses to rejection are:** *aggression, resentment, negative attitudes.*
- b) God approved **Abel's** sacrifice **but** did not accept what **Cain** had offered to him.
 - (1) He gave Cain the opportunity of discussing his feelings.
 - (2) Gen.4:6,7 **Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."**
 - (3) By doing this God gave him the chance to benefit from talking matters out & settings things right.
 - (a) "Cain, you can deal w/your resentment. You can offer the proper sacrifices & enjoy My acceptance as before."
 - (b) But, Cain would **not admit** his error, **nor offer** the proper sacrifices.
 - i) He wanted acceptance on his own terms. (def. for religion)
- c) **Cain had 3 courses of action** before him:
 - (1) **Go-In! (Internalize) - Bottle it.**
 - (a) Turn the hurt of rejection **inward** & inflict punishment for his *feelings of guilt* upon himself.
 - (b) This self-inflicted hurt might have made him feel (*temporarily*) that he had **atoned** for the wrong he had done. *It sounds like this... "I feel bad, what else do you want from me?"*
 - (2) **Go-Out! (Externalize) - Blame others.**
 - (a) This is when you *project* your attitude outward.
 - (b) He could have blamed his damaged emotions on someone/something else.
 - (3) **Go-Up! (Revitalize) - See himself as God sees him.**
 - (a) Cain could have sought to restore his relationship with the Lord.
- d) **Cain choose curtain #2** - He chose to **project** his anger outward.
 - (1) The person who is angry is always right in his/her own eyes.
 - (2) The final act of the drama takes place when God appeared & asked Cain, **"Where is your brother Abel?"** He said he didn't know, but then **projected** his blame for Abel's death on God, **"Am I my brothers keeper?"** meaning, *"aren't you supposed to be?"*

¹ Barber: The Books of Samuel; pg.100-102

2. **Samuel** - The **Right** response to Rejection!

- a) This displeased Samuel...so Samuel **prayed!**
- b) He immediately took matters to the Lord.
- c) *He didn't **argue** w/them & **pray afterwards!***
- d) He 1st retreated where he laid the whole matter before **the One** who had commissioned him to lead his people.
 - (1) **By praying he was able to let go** of the problem, **reassure** himself of his standing before the Lord, & **receive a new perspective** on the situation.
- e) In Samuel's **attitude & actions** we have **the secret** of overcoming the debilitating effects of rejection!
 - (1) **By prayer we are able to discuss** everything w/the Lord.
 - (2) **By prayer we are able to tell him** exactly how we feel & why.
 - (3) **By prayer we are able to receive** an entirely new perspective that keeps us from harboring resentment & blaming others for our situations.
 - (4) **By prayer we are able to receive** new direction.
- f) **As Samuel prayed, the Lord was able to encourage him.** (See vs.7)
 - (1) This **new perspective** took the sting out of what had happened & kept Samuel from nursing a grievance.
- g) Samuel also **received explicit instructions** from the Lord (vs.9)

3. All too often we **argue first & pray later!**

M. (9) **Heed their voice** (7,9) - How scary when God says "*listen to the people*".

1. How often do you want God to **listen to you?**
2. Yet, we ask Him to **heed our voice** often!
3. Go ahead & **heed, but warn!**

N. **RESULTS OF THEIR REJECTION!** (10-18)

O. This was the typical behavior of oriental despots of that day.

1. The people had **every right** to be dissatisfied with the administration of Samuel's sons, **but** the *system of government* the whole nation was now requesting...would be much worse.
2. Solomon & others would place **heavy taxes** on the people.
3. We learn here, **future events are affected by present decisions.**

- P. (11) Note how many times he uses, “**he will take**” (6 x’s)
- Q. **What’s it worth to you?** Ready to give up your grain & grapes; your olives & animals; your boys & girls? Ready to basically become his slaves? (sounds just a little like big gov?)
1. **Both Satan & The World System is always ready to take:** your innocence, your reputation, your integrity; your purity, your virginity, your best from you!
- R. **Wrong Timing:** They were about 10 years too soon in asking for a king.
Wrong Tribe: Judah not Benjamin.
Wrong Temperament: this king would have the wrong nature, spirit, & character.
Wrong to Take: Saul will oppress his people with this system of arbitrary *spoliation*.
1. He will not be a king that **gives**, but a king that **takes**.
 2. What a contrast between this **exacting king** & the true **King of Kings**, who “**loved me & gave himself for me**”!
 3. **Saul will take** all he can; **Jesus will give** all that is His & give all that He is!
- S. **FORCED RETIREMENT!** (19-22)
- T. Their **request** in vs.5 now becomes a **demand** in vs.19.
1. **They would not wait** for God’s appointed time.
 2. **They** desired to be **like the other nations**.
 3. **They** had forgotten that **to be different** from the other nations was their glory.
 4. **They feared** the strength of the Ammonites(12:12).
- U. Though they had trouble following their **heavenly** king, they still ask for an **earthly** monarch.
1. Maybe they thought a shiny golden crown **or** flowing robes might intimidate their enemy in battle?
- V. Much that Samuel *worked for & prayed for* seems to have turned out differently from what he expected.
1. Yet, he remained faithful to the Lord to the end!
 2. Leaders who are **faithful to God** may not always appear **successful to men**.
 3. The people failed to give Samuel the **recognition** that should crown an honorable career.
 - a) And they **turned him out of office** to make room for another whose gifts & abilities had not been proven.
 - b) Ingratitude is hard to bear. He did the only thing he knew to do...he again takes the matter to the Lord in **prayer!** (21)

- W. (21) **Of course God knew perfectly well what had taken place.** This is called ***giving vent to your feelings***. [to which God gives further direction]
1. **Note also...**Samuel's prayer **did not** change his circumstances.
 2. So often when we pray we expect that God will suddenly & miraculously bring about a **reversal** of what is unpleasant to us.
 3. We are then **disappointed** when He does not act in accordance with **our** expectations.
- X. (22) **Go home until God makes known His choice.** In effect, God said, *"they shall have their king. And when they see how poorly he reigns, they'll wish they had stuck with Me"*
- Y. Samuel remained loyal to the people of Israel in spite of their rejection of him.
1. His **role** was **reduced**, but his **lightened responsibility** gave him the opportunity to spend more time **training** promising young men in the schools of the prophets.

I like what the 16yr old who attempted to sail around the world, *Abby Sunderland*, said in her blog, *"The long and the short of it is, well, one long wave, and one short mast."*

G. Campbell Morgan(pastor of Westminster Chapel) was one of 150 young men who sought entrance to the Wesleyan ministry in 1888. He passed the doctrinal examinations, but then faced the trial sermon. In a cavernous auditorium that could seat more than 1,000 sat **3 ministers** and **75 others** who came to listen. When Morgan stepped into the pulpit, the vast room and the searching, critical eyes caught him up short. Two weeks later Morgan's name appeared among the **105 REJECTED** for the ministry that year.

Jill Morgan, his daughter-in-law, wrote in her book, *A Man Of The Word*, "He wired to his father the one word, '**Rejected,**' and sat down to write in his diary: 'Very dark everything seems. Still, He knoweth best.' Quickly came the reply: '**Rejected on earth. Accepted in heaven. Dad.**'"

But, **rejection is rarely permanent**, as Morgan went on to prove.