

1 Samuel 12

7-11-10

“Samuel’s Farewell Address!”

I. INTRO:

- A. “**Methods** are many, **principles** are few; **Methods** always change, **principles** never do.”
- B. **Last week** (ch.11) Saul & the people rejoiced over the deliverance of Jabesh-Gilead from the Ammonites, & Saul was careful to **give the glory to the Lord**.(11:13b)
1. The fact that **Saul** led the army in a great victory would tempt them to put their faith in their new king.
 2. **Samuel** wanted them to know their future success rested in trusting **Jehovah** alone. **Samuel will mention the Lord 30 times** in this message.
- C. **Rousing speeches** on big occasions can *change human behavior*. (JFK; MLK)
1. Yet, Samuel’s speech is not underwritten by clever rhetoric, it’s a speech *underwritten by the Lord himself* who is responding to a rebellious people.
 2. It’s a **coronation** address, a **revival** sermon, & a **farewell** speech.
- D. **Outline:** Our theme this morning is *Faithfulness!*
Samuel’s Faithfulness; The Lord’s Faithfulness; & The People Faithlessness.
1. In 1912 **William Borden**, a graduate of Yale University, left one of America’s greatest family fortunes to be a missionary to China. **He** got as far as Egypt and died of cerebral meningitis. **He** died - and was only in his 20s - **but** there was “**no reserve, no retreat, no regrets**” in his consecration to God.
 2. **Was he unsuccessful?** I think he was **radically successful** because he was **wholly faithful**.
 3. **I think of David Livingstone**, the pioneer missionary to Africa, who walked over 29,000 miles. His wife died early in their ministry & he faced stiff opposition from his Scottish brethren. **And**, he ministered half blind. **Words in his diary:**
 Send me anywhere, **only** go with me. Lay any burden on me, **only** sustain me. Sever me from any tie but the tie that binds me to Your service & to Your heart

II. SAMUEL’S FAREWELL ADDRESS!

- A. **SAMUEL’S FAITHFULNESS!** (1-5)
- B. (1,2) The elderly *prophet/judge* **Samuel** addressed the nation of Israel publicly for the last time in his career.
1. He now transfers the *civil authority* to Saul. The Israelites go from being led by **Judges** (for 500 years) to their **1st king**.
 2. Before leaving office as Judge he sets the record straight his hands were clean

- C. (3-5) A common response to leaders who find themselves needing to **correct** and **rebuke** is to have their **character undermined** as leaders. **Samuel will have none of this.**
1. Many would have known him since he was a child at the tabernacle in Shiloh.
 2. He has spent his whole life serving them & now is **old & gray-headed!**
 3. Almost sounds like what **Jesus** would say later in *Jn.8:46* “**Which of you convicts Me of sin?**”
 4. **Samuel** was a man of integrity; **Saul** would turn out to be a man of hypocrisy & duplicity. (Warren Wiersbe)
- D. How wonderful to get toward the end of your life & be able to review your life/ministry & not be afraid or ashamed.
1. May we be able to say like Christ, **I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.** *Jn.17:4*
- E. Samuel, a man of integrity:
If Ethics are your personal beliefs & values (what you **say** you believe);
And, Morals are your ways of living your life (what you actually **do**);
Then, Integrity is when your *ethics* are proven by your *morals* (thats, when what you **say** you believe, is matched by **how you choose to live** your life).
- F. **THE LORD'S FAITHFULNESS!** (6-11)
- G. *The 1 thing we learn from history is that we don't learn from history,* & Samuel didn't want his people to make that mistake!
1. But this wasn't just a **lecture** from history; It was also a **court trial!**
 2. In vs.7 Samuel uses words with **a judicial flavor:**
 - a) **Stand still** - carries the idea of “*stand up, court is in session.*”
 - b) **Reason** - means “*to decide a case of litigation.*”
- (1) **Samuel** was going to prove to the people that the Lord had been righteous & faithful in all His dealings w/Israel, **but** that the Jews had been faithless & disobedient.¹
- H. It was **God** **not** *the people*, who **appointed** Moses & Aaron & who enabled them to do the **mighty works** they did for the people of Israel.
- I. (8) Israel *in Egypt* cried out to the Lord for help & He sent them Moses & Aaron.
- J. (9-11) *Once they were in the land*, they compromised their faith & joined in worshipping the false gods of their neighbors; **so** God had to discipline them.

¹ Warren Wiersbe: Be Successful; pg.61

1. These verses represent the book of judges w/its *7 cycles of sin to salvation disobedience, discipline, & deliverance*. (See Judges 2:10; 16,17,18,19)
2. He mentions *himself* as the last of the judges!

K. **THE PEOPLE'S FAITHLESSNESS?** (12-25)

L. (14,15) They knew the terms of the covenant: **if they obeyed, then the Lord would bless; if they disobeyed, then the Lord would chasten.**

1. A wife who is **85% faithful** to her husband is **not faithful at all**. Thus, There is no such thing as **part-time loyalty** to Jesus Christ! Vance Havner
2. Obedience or disobedience, either way **God** would be faithful to His Word. The issue was whether **Israel** would be faithful?

M. (16-18) Samuel **prays up a storm** during the dry season of *wheat harvest*.

N. (19) They recognize their *past sins* & their **new big one**.

O. (20) Samuel moves from *fear* to **do not fear** as he encourages the people to accept their situation their unbelief created & make the most of it now.

1. **You made a bad mistake, but** God would help them if they **feared & obeyed** Him

P. (22) **For His great name's sake** - God's purpose was to use Israel to bring glory to His name, & He would fulfill that purpose.

Q. (23) No matter what they decided Samuel would be faithful to **pray for them & teach them** the Word of God. [**Prayer & Word** always goes together!]

1. Acts6:4 **but we'll give ourselves continually to prayer & to the ministry of the word**
2. **Wow**, For God's people **not to pray** is to **sin** against the Lord!
3. **Quote:** God's child can conquer anything by **prayer**. Is it any wonder that Satan does his utmost to *snatch that weapon* from the Christian **or** to hinder him in the use of it?²
4. **Did you know?** There is a small group that meets upstairs on Tuesday nights to simply intercede for their *children/young adults/adult children*. (Eric Wells)
5. God will bless **Elijah** & send rain on Israel, but **Elijah must pray for it**. If the chosen nation is to prosper, **Samuel must plead for it**. God will bless **Paul**, & the nations shall be converted through him, but **Paul must pray**. God will effect lives around you saint, but **you must plead & intercede on their behalf!**
 - a) Oh that **our prayers** would be like lightning rods that pierce the clouds & bring down the mighty & mysterious power from on high! (Spurgeon)

R. (24) **Fear** Him; **Serve** Him; & **Consider/thank** Him!

S. (25) **Swept away** - which is what happened; they were swept *400 miles away* to Babylon!

²Andrew Murray

T. **YOUR FAITHFULNESS?**U. When you think of the cross do you think **success** or **faithfulness**?1. What we are about as followers of Christ is not **success** but **faithfulness**.2. **Q:** Would you consider **your walk with Jesus...Faithful?**V. **Background of story:** **Gurkhas** are best known for their history of bravery and strength in the Indian Army's *Gorkha regiments*. The Gurkhas were naturally warlike and aggressive in battle, & possessed qualities of courage, loyalty, self sufficiency, physical strength, resilience, orderliness, the ability to work hard for long periods of time, & their fighting tenacity & military strategy.1. ***"If a man says he is not afraid of dying, he is either lying or is a Gurkha"***W. In his book *One Crowded Hour*, Tim Bowden describes an incident in **Borneo** in 1964. **Nepalese fighters** known as **Gurkhas** were asked if they would be willing to *jump from airplanes* into combat against the Indonesians. The Gurkhas didn't clearly understand what was involved, but they bravely said they would do it, asking only that the plane fly slowly over a swampy area and no higher than 100 feet. When they were told that the parachutes would not have time to open at that height, the Gurkhas replied, ***"Oh, you didn't mention parachutes!"***X. We think ***giving our all to the Lord*** is like taking a **\$1,000 bill** and laying it on the table - ***"Here's my life, Lord. I'm giving it all."***1. **But the reality for most of us is that he sends us to the bank & has us cash in the \$1,000 *for quarters!* We go through life putting out 25¢ here & 50¢ there.**a) You listen to the neighbor kid's troubles instead of saying, *'get lost'*; you give someone a ride; you give a cup of water to a *shaky old man* in a nursing home.b) Usually giving our life to Christ **isn't** glorious!...It's done in all those *little acts of love*, 25¢ at a time.2. **It would be *easy* to go out in a flash of glory; It's **harder** to live the Christian life *little by little* over the long haul!**Y. Each ministry needs a Samuel to remind them of the **spiritual principles** that **never change**: *the character of God; the Word of God; the necessity of faith; & the importance of obedience!*1. **Methods** are many, **principles** are few; **Methods** always change, **principles** never do.Z. **Invite *Ives* back up.****Prayer:** I'd like to end with a prayer *Bobby Richardson* offered (former NY Yankee 2nd baseman) that is a classic in brevity and poignancy: ***"Dear God, Your will, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else. Amen."***