

“Demarcation!”

I. **INTRO:**

A. **Demarcation** (dēmār'kā sh ən) *noun* The action of fixing the boundary or limits of something.

1. This ch. is David's line of *demarcation*.

B. This is an important moment in David's life. This is where *self-will* brings you!

1. **David is in a desperate position.** He was overcome by depression & fear of Saul, **so** he had taken refuge among the Philistines.

2. Now he is ready to step into a battle, **but** he's on **the wrong side!**

3. He is ready to step into a battle, *against* “God's people”, *against* “his people”.

4. He found himself involved in a **hopeless compromise** from which there seemed to be **no escape**.

5. He found himself **not trusted** by king Saul; **but** now in this chapter worse still, **not trusted** even by the Philistines!

6. Let's remember, this is not merely an interesting OT story...**It is also a 21st century experience.**

a) We know, **no man can serve 2 masters!** - This narrative is written for all who *live as near as possible to the world*,...just as close as they dare!

b) It's those who whose *line of demarcation* between **the child of God & the unbeliever** is pretty much **invisible**.

C. Our story is about when **God** saves you *from your foolishness!*

1. **David was out of place**, **but** God in His mercy cared for him.

2. This **is not** an **excuse** to sin, **it is** an **encouragement** when we do.

D. **Background** (28:1,2) - **Achish** was so fooled by **David**, that he wanted to make him his personal bodyguard.

1. To make matters worse, **Achish** planned a major assault on **Israel**, w/David & his men right by his side.

2. **See what troubles David** caused himself by making a decision out of **fear** instead of **faith**? How could he fight against his own people?

3. **Yet** if he didn't fight, his cover would be blown.

II. DEMARCATION!

A. PASSING IN REVIEW! (1-5)

B. (1) **Aphek** - a military staging site near Philistine territory. It had plenty of water, grain fields, & places to camp.

C. **A fountain which is in Jezreel** - *spring of Harod*, at the foot of Gilboa.

1. None other than Gideon's Spring. (where Gideon's men drank)

D. (2) **The lords of the Philistines** - *Pentapolis* (Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, Gath, & Gaza)

E. (3) **What are these Hebrews doing here?** - Good question, legit question!

F. **Do I ever give the world cause to say, "What is that Christian doing here?"**

1. 2 Cor. 6:14,15 **Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.** For what do **righteousness** and **wickedness** have in common? Or what fellowship can **light** have with **darkness**? What harmony is there between **Christ & Belial**? What does a **believer** have in common with an **unbeliever**?

2. Of course there is **danger** in the *opposite extreme*, when *separation* equals *isolation* to a point of having *no contact* at all w/the unsaved.

3. **Our position as Christians is...**to simply copy *the example of Jesus*, who was friends of sinners; so near to those in desperate need; & **yet** holy, harmless, separate, & undefiled.

a) **Do you ever find yourself in the *wrong camp*, going along with the *wrong company*?** You've lowered your standard to fit in. Your favorite & only Scripture is, "*I've become all things to all men.*" - Till one day, in utter humiliation, you come to a point where the unbeliever, who now holds a higher standard than you, suddenly turns to you & says, "*What are you, a Christian, doing here?*"

b) *If so...you just might be in the wrong spot!*

G. (4) **Make this fellow return** - the infamous Philistine killer!

1. We see how God in His great mercy was using the **jealousy & distrust** of the philistine leaders to **extricate** David from his dilemma.

2. **Note *His sovereignty* even over those who don't know Him!**

H. (5) The song shows Saul & David fought together *at one time*.

1. **Yet very Interesting**, God uses **the song** that got him **in trouble** with Saul; to get him **out of trouble** with the Philistines.

- I. **A MAN w/o A COUNTRY!** (6-11)
- J. Now David was neither Israelite nor Philistine a man w/o a county; a man w/o an identity
- K. (6) David continues his deception by appearing to be deeply hurt by the order.
- L. David a *gifted actor!* Achish never detected anything. **But, I don't think this is a compliment!**
1. What value is there in being successful at **deception?**
 2. Remember, it was *Hypocrisy & lying* that destroyed King Saul.
- M. **Another ambiguous statement...** "that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?"(8b). [King? Achish or Jehovah? Enemies? The Jews or the Philistines]
- N. (8) David must have breathed a *sigh of relief* at his turn of events, yet publicly expressed indignation that he wouldn't be able to fight.
- O. David doesn't really want meet Saul on the battlefield nor fight against his own people.
1. When you *fraternize with the enemy*, you create difficult problems.
 2. **Praise God for** Ps.103:10-14 (NLT) **He does not punish us for all our sins; he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. The Lord is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him. For he knows how weak we are; he remembers we are only dust.**
- P. Though the Lord was **gracious** to deliver David & his men from participating in this battle, He isn't obligated to step in & extricate His people from situations caused by their own sinful decisions.
1. We reap what we sow.
 2. In later years David suffered *being deceived* by members of **his own staff & even his own family.**

III. Lessons Learned:

- A. It is indeed true, that **the darkest hour** in man's experience is always *just before the dawning of new light!*¹
1. We find David here in real **extremity** - but when man is in such a place... **God is there too!**
 2. You may not recognize it. You may feel helplessly adrift in the storm; but always, **the Lord is near to them of a broken heart.** (Ps.34:18)
 3. Alan Redpath said David proved this truth, "Man's **extremity** is God's **opportunity!**"

¹ Alan Redpath: The Making of the Man of God; ch.13

- a) We have **Extreme** everything now: Extreme Sports; Extreme Videos; Extreme Fitness; Extreme Makeovers; Extreme Music(Extreme Metal Music?); **even** Extreme Ironing (google image search).
- b) **Extremity** obviously comes from that word **Extreme**. It means: when something is at its farthest limits; farthest point/boundary/border/or frontier. It's being in dire straights; trouble; difficulty; adversity; predicament; being in Hot Water.
 - (1) **And here is where we find David but...Man's extremity is God's opportunity!**

4. The Lord is **nearest** to those who would cry, as Asaph did, in Ps.73:2 (NLT) **But as for me, I almost lost my footing. My feet were slipping, & I was almost gone**

- a) Oh, that each of us have the attitude of **helplessness**, in the presence of the Lord.
- b) **Conscious weakness** is always a prerequisite for **heavenly reinforcement**.
 - (1) **When I am weak, then, & only then, am I strong.**
 - (2) When **self-confidence** steps in, **heavenly strength** runs out!

5. So, **does a man who behaves like this find himself forsaken of God? Indeed he doesn't!** - Read Deut. 30:4-9 (context vs.2 "**return to the Lord your God**")

- a) We'll watch **David** turn next week...but **you** don't have to wait till next week...**turn back to Him this week!**
- b) **It is thrilling to know** that no matter **how far** that man has gone, **the blood** of his **redemption** goes farther!
- c) No matter how far his wanderings have taken him from God, he is **never, never** beyond the reach of our wonderful Lord!
- d) How the Lord **watched over** David as he **wandered away!**

B. **Remember**, our story is about when God saves you from your foolishness!

- 1. David was **out of place**, but God in His mercy cared for him.
- 2. This **is not** an **excuse** to sin, **it is** an **encouragement** when we do!

C. **Even when** I am **out of** God's will; **when** I have **refused** God's discipline; **when** I have **sought to escape** His loving chastening; **when** I have found myself **trapped** in compromise; **when** I feel that the Lord must have justifiably forsaken me forever; **there is no one under heaven to whom He is not nearer!**

- 1. 2 Tim.2:13 **If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.**
- 2. **Can you resist** a God like that?
- 3. **Can you keep** your back turned on a God like that?

D. **There is a wonderful story** that illustrates the *radical discrepancy* between the ways in which we *hold other people hostage in their sin*, **and** the *unconditional forgiveness* that God offers to us in Christ.

1. **A little boy killed his grandmother's pet duck?** He accidentally hit the duck with a rock from his slingshot. The boy didn't think anybody saw the foul deed, so he buried the duck in the backyard and didn't tell a soul.

Later, the boy found out that **his sister** had seen it all. Not only that, she now had the leverage of his secret and used it. Whenever it was the sister's turn to wash the dishes, take out the garbage or wash the car, she would whisper in his ear, "**Remember the duck.**" And then, the little boy would do what his sister should have done.

There is always a limit to that sort of thing. **Finally**, he couldn't take it anymore - he'd had it! The boy went to his grandmother and, with great fear, confessed what he had done. **To his surprise**, she hugged him and thanked him. She said, "I was standing at the kitchen sink and saw the whole thing. I forgave you then. I was just wondering when you were going to get tired of your sister's blackmail and come to me."

E. If God already **saw & so desires to forgive you**, **don't** let anybody say to you, "**Remember the duck!**"

1. Is there anyone holding you hostage in your sin?
2. Are you holding yourself hostage?
3. Accept the *unconditional forgiveness* that God offers to us, **in Christ**.