

Sermon Text Discussion Notes 09/09/2018

1 Samuel 5-7 – “Who Is Able to Stand Before this Holy God?” by Drew Hunter

Overview

This sermon is the fourth in our series on the book of 1 Samuel. These passages follow the ark's time with the Philistines and subsequent return to Israel. Throughout this story we are confronted with examples of God's severity and his kindness. We are reminded that if we don't see both aspects, then we won't be able to answer the question at the heart of this text. It is the most important question in anyone's life, found in 1 Samuel 6:20, **“Who is able to stand before the Lord, this holy God?”** This story shows us the wrong ways and the only way to answer this question.

The sermon text was outlined as follows:

- The Severity of God (5:1-6:21)
- The Kindness of God (7:1-21)
- Three Kinds of People

Quotations

“I am convinced that it [the holiness of God] is one of the most important ideas that a Christian can ever grapple with. It is basic to the whole understanding of God and of Christianity” R. C. Sproul (The Holiness of God)

“Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, does, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of and endeavor after new obedience.” (The Westminster Confession)

Understanding & Application

- 1) We often miss the true weightiness of God by either having too light a view of his severity or too light a view of his kindness. What are the implications of one or the other?
- 2) Drew discussed and paraphrased C. S. Lewis' thoughts on the three types of people in the world: I.) Those who reject God and live for their own pleasure II.) Those who acknowledge a higher claim, partially honor God and keep a divide between religious time and “me time” III.) Those who turn to God with all their hearts and trust in his kindness through Christ's sacrifice. Within these passages, which groups represent each type and why? Ponder what it will be like for each of these types of people on the day of judgement.
- 3) One of the reasons the Israelites were under God's judgement was the presence of idols among them; a violation of the first commandment. In many ways, they were no different from their pagan neighbors. Idols can be described as anything we set our heart on, other than God. Are there any idols in our lives that make us no different from unbelievers? What can we learn from Chapter 7 on how to repent from this?
- 4) In light of God's holiness and wrath on display here, consider Christ bearing this in our place.
- 5) In chapter 7, Samuel set up an Ebenezer (stone of help) to commemorate what the Lord did for the Israelites. Think about what the Lord has done for you. What are some practical ways you can commemorate his kindness?
- 6) The three words we use to describe who we are as a church are worship, community, and mission. How can what we learn from this text color how we view and approach each of these areas?