

1 Samuel: The People Demand a King

1 Samuel 8:1-10:26

While God warns the people through Samuel that if he gives them the king they want then they will beg him for relief, they don't listen. So God hands them over to their desires and gives them Saul who will reign over them for 42 years—displaying both God's mercy and discipline.

Application

1. Our reflexive reaction to problems reveals the truth about who we are. Think about the last difficulty or interruption to your life the past few days—what was it, and what was your first response?
2. When your identity or security is threatened, where do you run first for comfort? By choosing that person or thing, who or what are you actually trusting in?
3. What are you doing now to flex your spiritual muscle memory? Have you had the kind of experience in your life where you have gotten to the end of yourself and your desire for a solution or control?
4. The people have convinced themselves that they can simultaneously do what they want and have the benefits of what God wants. Where could you be living like this in your life?

Key Points

- When we encounter adversity, we have an opportunity to figure out what we ultimately trust in. In 1 Samuel 8, we see the elders seek comfort in clarity and a solution, while Samuel immediately seeks God for guidance.
- Our reflexive reaction to problems reveals the truth about who we are.
- Samuel's reflexive reaction to adversity is to go straight to God because his spiritual muscle memory has formed over years of choosing God first. He knows that when he is up against something, he does not want to be in charge. He wants God to be in charge.
- Your spiritual muscle memory formed through the hardships of life enables you to be able to respond like Christ in the moment.
- You will reap the consequences of trying to have both the benefits of following Jesus and the comforts of those who do not follow him.
- The hungriest people are not the ones who have nothing to eat but the ones who have glutted themselves on what they thought would satisfy them, but they get to the other side and realize they are still hungry.
- Although Saul is externally what everyone would expect for a king, his actions reveal that he is internally fragile and pridefully self-protective.
- In God's wisdom, he can discipline and judge and at the same time show mercy.

Other Scripture References

[Deuteronomy 17:14-20](#)

[Judges 8:23](#)