

Faith Family Worship Guide – Week 33

MEMORIZE

- For those with 1st-5th graders at Brook Hills, focus on the verses that they are memorizing in Children’s Ministry for this unit.
 - 1st Grade – Psalm 100:3-5
 - 2nd Grade – Matthew 7:7-11
 - 3rd Grade – Matthew 7:24-27
 - 4th Grade – 1 John 3:1, 2
 - 5th Grade – Psalm 51:1, 2

READ

As our church reads through the Bible for the next two years, each day will include a chapter from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. As a family, decide if you want to read one or both of these passages. The Faith Family Worship Guide will look ahead to the readings for the upcoming week.

Read: 1 Samuel 13:8-14; 16:1, 4-13

Questions:

- Why did God reject Saul as king? How did Saul get to this point in his attitude towards God? In what ways have you acted like Saul?
- Why did God choose David as king?
- What can we learn from the examples of these two men?
- What was Samuel basing his choice on? How did that differ from what God based His decision on?
- Why is it important to know that “the LORD looks on the heart” (1 Sam. 16:7)? Why is this a good thing? How does this help us trust God more?
- What do these passages have to do with how God wants us to live?
- What is one way that these passages need to affect your attitude, words, and/or actions this week?

Bottom Line: God knows all things and bases His decisions on His perfect knowledge and not on people’s actions and words.

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created by the age-group ministry leaders as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God’s word and worship him together.

Preschool

- Was Saul a good king?
- Did he do what was right?
- Did he obey God?
- What did Saul do wrong?
- So what did God have to do?
- Does God like sin?
- Who did God choose to be the next king?
- Why did God choose David?
- Who is in charge of everything and knows everything?

Children

- Talk with your children about things they do to take care of their appearance.
 - Brush their teeth and hair
 - Take baths
 - Wear clean clothes

- These things are important to do, but there is something even more important.
- Read I Samuel 16:7b.
- It is more important to take care of our heart.
- How do we take care of our heart?
 - Reading God’s Word and obeying it
 - Praying
 - Spending time with other Christ-followers who care about your heart
- Pray together asking that when God looks at your heart, He sees a person who wants to follow Him.

Students

- Where in your world have you seen people make “exceptions to the rules?” (For example the “I” before “E” rule in the English language.)
- Have you ever seen someone “get away” with something because they felt they were the exception to a rule?
- Have you ever seen someone endure harsh consequences because they had this perspective in a situation?
- Read Malachi 3:6.
- Knowing that God does not change tells us what about “exceptions” when it comes to how we obey God?
- Where do you struggle to live consistently when it comes to following God’s word and His character?
- How have you also seen His grace in your life when it comes to forgiveness for these areas of struggle?
- Does this cause you to seek more exceptions in your life, or to want to make fewer exceptions?

SING

In many aspects of life, we trust the people who are considered “experts”. We rely on the superior wisdom they’ve collected through years of study and experience. How much *more* can we trust the eternal God who has complete and perfect knowledge of all people, circumstances, and details of life? How much *more* can we rely on the one who loves us with an everlasting love? Let’s meditate on this as we sing “Behold Our God”. Written in 2011 by Sovereign Grace Music, the lyrics praise the Lord for His limitless knowledge, saving power, and sovereign authority. The second verse says:

*Who has given counsel to the Lord?
Who can question any of His words?
Who can teach the One who knows all things?
Who can fathom all His wondrous deeds?*

Let’s praise the Lord for His many perfections!

Visit our website for a link to this song: www.brookhills.org/gathering/this_week.html.

WHERE WE ARE IN THE STORY

Readings for August 18-24

1 Samuel 10-16 and Romans 8-14

Where We Are In The Story (1 Samuel)

Background of 1 Samuel: Originally, 1 and 2 Samuel were one book but were divided into two books (probably because of length) in the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Old Testament. 1 Samuel spans Israel’s history from the era of the judges to the establishment of a monarchy in Israel, and Samuel, Saul, and David stand as the main characters in this book. While we do not know who wrote 1 and 2 Samuel, one common conjecture assigns 1 Samuel 1-24 to Samuel and the rest to Nathan and Gad who were two prophets and contemporaries of King David.

Structure of 1 Samuel:

- 1 Samuel 1-7 describe the life of Samuel, the last judge of Israel.
- 1 Samuel 8-12 express the establishment of a monarchy in Israel with Saul as the first king.
- 1 Samuel 13-15 record the circumstances that led God to reject Saul and his line as rulers in Israel.
- 1 Samuel 16-31 chronicle the life of David beginning when God appointed him as the next king of Israel and

concluding with the death of Saul when David assumed the throne.

This Week in 1 Samuel: 1 Samuel 10-16 follows the rise and fall of Saul's kingship in Israel, which presented a dismal start to Israel's monarchy. Within seven chapters, Saul went from being the Lord's anointed to being rejected by the Lord and being tormented by evil spirits. 1 Samuel 13-15 presents three scenes that exemplify Saul's failure as a ruler and what led to his rejection:

- Instead of waiting for Samuel to arrive and offer the burnt offerings and peace offerings, Saul rushed ahead and offered them himself because of the trembling of his people before a battle (1 Sam. 13:1-13). He overstepped his bounds and God's design by doing a task that was specifically for priests. As a result, God sought another to rule His people, and Saul's kingdom would not be eternal in the sense that the Messiah would not come from his line (1 Sam. 13:13-14).
- Saul made a regrettable, rash vow that neither he nor his army would eat until they had been avenged (1 Sam. 14). Unaware of his father's vow, Jonathan eats honey and strikes down the Philistines, and the people of Israel had to talk Saul out of killing Jonathan. His impulsiveness and vindictiveness are not desired characteristics of a king of Israel.
- Instead of destroying the Amalekites and all of their possessions as commanded by God, Saul killed the people but spared their king, their livestock, and all that had value (1 Sam. 15:1-9). As a result, God sends Samuel to inform Saul that he has been rejected as king. 1 Samuel 16 continues by describing the selection of this next king who will rule Israel and by telling how he gains experience by first serving in Saul's court. God's selection of David is confirmed when the Holy Spirit comes upon him (1 Sam. 16:13).

This theme of the Lord's anointed repeats throughout Samuel (1 Sam. 16:3, 6, 12-13; 24:6; 26:9, 11, 16, 23; 2 Sam. 1:14, 16; 3:39; 19:21), which is appropriate for the two books that describe Israel's first three kings. But there is a greater significance to this phrase being used with Israel's earliest monarchs. "Anointed One" also stands as the meaning of Messiah. While 1 and 2 Samuel puts forth human kings who are sinful and imperfect in their rule, there is an ultimate "anointed one" (Jesus Christ) who is a righteous ruler and who will be like David but greater as a King. The royal psalms – many written by King David – describe the rule and the characteristics of this King (Ps. 2; 18; 20; 21; 45; 72; 89; 101; 110; 132; 144).

Where We Are In The Story (Romans)

Background of Romans: Paul's wrote the letter to the church in Rome, which was a church he had not visited prior to writing the letter, to prepare them for his arrival before attempting to take the gospel to Spain. However, Paul did not make it to Rome until he was under house arrest while he appealed to Caesar (Acts 28), and as far as we know, he never made it further west than Rome. The church in Rome contained both Jewish and Gentile Christians, and this mixed community provided opportunity for conflict as seen in Romans 14-15. Romans 1:16-17 marks the thesis of Romans, for it explains the gospel as "the righteousness of God" that is available to all who believe. Romans 1-11 gives an overview of God's plan to redeem humanity, and Romans 12-16 describes how we should live in light of what God has accomplished.

Structure of Romans:

- Romans 1:1-15 contains Paul's greetings to the church at Rome and his tentative travel plans.
- Romans 1:16-4:25 unpack God's wrath towards sinners and His grace towards those who trust in Christ.
- Romans 5-8 describe the hope and obedience of Christ-followers, despite a continued struggle against sin.
- Romans 9-11 survey God's plan to save both Jews and Gentiles.
- Romans 12:1-15:13 explain how Christians are to live in light of the gospel.
- Romans 15:14-16:27 include Paul's concluding remarks to the Roman believers, his upcoming travel plans, and his personal greetings.

This Week in Romans: Having spent chapter seven lamenting his inability to fulfill God's commands even though it was his desire to keep them, Paul closes Romans 7 with a note of despair before turning to the hope and freedom that comes with being in Christ. While Romans 3 teaches that we are condemned because of our sin, Romans 8:1 states that there is "no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." As a result of Christ's death and resurrection, the Spirit sets us free from our slavery to sin and death (Rom. 8:2) and enables us to live in a way that reflects our new position as children of God (Rom. 8:5-15). As Paul transitions from the power of sin to the power of Christ in our lives, he emphasizes the past,

present, and future work of the Holy Spirit in Romans 8.

The latter part of Romans 8 presents our future inheritance as outweighing any suffering we experience on this earth, and Paul lifts up creation as support for this position. Although creation suffers from a curse as a result of the Fall (Gen. 3), it will be restored. The Holy Spirit is evidence and a foretaste of what is to come for those who are Christ-followers, and the ability we currently have to communicate with God is a foretaste of the future consummation of the believer (the word “consummation” refers to when God will ultimately complete what He intended with His creation). Because of God’s power and promises, we can have hope and assurance with regards to our future.

The topics of predestination and election can be controversial topics when one studies Romans. Romans 9-11 address the issue of Israel’s unbelief. God specifically made the Old Covenant with Israel, but what would happen to “God’s chosen people” who did not trust in Christ as their Lord and Savior? How was their unbelief part of God’s plan? Were the Gentiles replacing them under the New Covenant? With Paul being an apostle to the Gentiles, the contents of Romans 9-11 were no doubt topics that he had to address in his ministry, especially if Jews and Gentiles were to be a unified body of believers.

Paul states his thesis for Romans 9-11 in 9:6: “But it is not as though the word of God has failed...” He denies the belief that any particular group of people has a birthright for salvation, for one’s ethnicity or religious heritage does not grant them salvation. Instead, all who trust in Christ for salvation are descendants of Abraham (9:6-13), and salvation is a work of God and a gift that He offers both to Jews and to Gentiles (9:14-29). Paul uses the examples of Isaac and Ishmael and Jacob and Esau to exemplify these truths. If birthright made one saved, then Ishmael’s descendants and Esau’s descendants would have been included as part of God’s people. God did not base His decisions on Ishmael or Esau’s conduct because He chose Isaac and Jacob before they were even born (see Gen. 25:23). As these verses demonstrate, He can call whomever He wants to be part of His people, despite their social status, conduct, or ethnicity.

In understanding the quotation from Malachi 1:2-3 in Romans 9:13 about God loving Jacob and hating Esau, we must learn the Greek meaning of the word “hate” to fully grasp what this verse is expressing. When we think of hating someone, despising and loathing are the connotations we have in mind, but the context and the word used both point toward the idea of rejection. God rejected Esau in the sense that He did not choose Esau to inherit the blessings promised to Abraham. So hate is not used as an emotion in verse thirteen but as an action that God carries out in how He chose one son of Isaac and rejected the other, because logically, only one son could be chosen to carry out the task of continuing the line of descendants.

Paul uses a question and answer format to address issues that would likely come up because of his argument in Romans 9:1-13:

- “What then shall we say then? Is there injustice on God’s part?” (9:14)
- “You will say to me then, ‘Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?’” (9:19)
- “What shall we say, then?” (9:30)

These questions and Paul’s responses cover issues about God’s character and man’s responsibility, and in order to further understand Romans 9 and the doctrine of election, listen to Pastor David’s sermon “The Marvel of God’s Mercy” from December 2010 on Romans 9.

Romans 9:30-10:21 provide an explanation for why Israel has rejected the gospel, and in *Theology of the New Testament*, Frank Thielman summarizes the reason for their rejection:

Both the law and the gospel...pointed in the same direction – toward a right relationship between God and his people, but God has provided Christ, not the law, as the means by which this relationship will be realized. By their rejection of the gospel and their insistence of living in an era dominated by the Mosaic law, many within Israel have implied that their own works (9:32) and their own righteousness (10:3) were preferable to the righteous status that comes from God through belief in the gospel (10:3).”

Romans 11:1-32 explains how the Gentiles came to be grafted into God’s chosen people, and after eleven chapters describing God’s incredibly detailed plan of redemption, Paul breaks out into praise of God’s knowledge and wisdom in Romans 11:33-36. In Romans 12, the book transitions into how the gospel affects the daily life of the believer. Whereas

Romans 1-11 describe what God has done, Romans 12-16 instruct believers in how to live. Romans 12 begins with instructions to the community of faith then expands to imperatives regarding their interaction in wider society then continues into chapter thirteen with how Christians are to live in relation to the government.

Romans 13:8-14:23 focus on love in action, which was particularly important for the multi-ethnic early church's interactions with each other and witness to the lost. Romans 14 mentions two specific groups of people in the church – the “stronger” and the “weaker.” While the stronger were theologically correct (14:14, 19; 5:1), they were flaunting their views and freedom and not being considerate of those who had different opinions (14:3, 10, 13), and the weak were judging and condemning those who did not uphold the food laws and other Mosaic requirements. As Paul Achtemeier states in his commentary on Romans, “The question at issue in this passage is the relationship between the *right* of Christians to use their freedom and their commensurate *responsibility* to use that undoubted freedom in a way that is constructive rather than destructive of Christian fellowship” (219). Overall, Paul emphasizes the importance of the stronger and the weaker loving each other, avoiding self-righteousness, and making edification and peace their goal instead of debate and judgment.