

There are **Bibles** in front of you

And we're looking at **1 Samuel chapter 26** - and we'll also be referring to **Matthew 26:47-56**.

Let me ask God for His help and guidance first - let's pray...

### **Intro/God's Way**

Sometimes it's *not so easy to know* if what we are doing is *God's will* - how do we know if what we're doing is our idea or God's plan?

Sometimes I hear people say - *God told me* to do such and such - and yet what they are about to do is - *not a wise thing* - or even a *Godly thing*?

Yes, there are certainly times, when we may *hear God's quiet inner voice* telling us to act - to phone someone - or visit someone - or pray for someone

*I came across a story recently of a young Christian man (no one in this church) who was convinced that God had told him - he must ask a certain girl out for a date - all his friends told him this wasn't a good idea - because they knew this girl wasn't interested - but the young man was convinced - God had told him.*

*So eventually he built up the courage - to go up to the girl and say "God told me I should ask you out on a date"*

*Wisely the girl, said "That's funny, God hasn't told me that"*

(pause)

[PowerPoint 1a-What's God's will?]

So, what is God's will for us? How do we know?

Well - how about looking at what the Bible says... (that's a good idea)

According to Jesus - He says in Mark 3:35 - **whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother** - so to be part of Jesus' family - we must do the will of the Father

[PowerPoint 1b-Matt 21:32]

And at its most **basic level** - Jesus says in Matthew 21:32 - **doing the will of the Father** - is to **say sorry to God for our sins and believe** in Jesus.

[PowerPoint 1c-Transform]

And the Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 12:2 - that if we should "**not conform** any longer to the pattern of this world, but be **transformed** by the renewing of our mind. Then we will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will."

This tells us that a true child of God *refuses* to be *conformed to what the world thinks they should do* - *but instead* allows themselves to be transformed by God's Spirit.

So, as our *minds are renewed to be aligned with* the the things of *God*, then our will becomes *aligned with God's will* for our lives.

[PowerPoint 1d-God's Word]

And let's not forget we always have *God's Word* as a guide and *lamp* to our feet (Psalm 119:105)

So, doing God's will boils down to **doing things God's way and not our way**

Why should we do that?

[PowerPoint 2-Isa 55:9]

Because as Isaiah 55:9 says:

As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are **my ways higher than your ways** and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Basically, **God's way is better than ours!**

[PowerPoint 3-Heading]

In our story from 1 Samuel 26 today - we learn how to do things God's way - and we see what God's way looks like...

[PowerPoint 3a-faith in plan/timing]

**1. God's way looks like - having faith in God's plan and God's timing (1 Sam 26:1-12)**

First, God's way looks like - **Having faith in God's plan** and in God's **timing** that's in 1 Sam 26 - vv1-12

- Remember - David already **spared Saul's life** - back in **chapter 24** - in the cave
- David could have killed Saul - but instead David just **cut a corner of his garment** to prove he had the opportunity to kill Saul
- David had **hoped** this might convince **Saul** to **stop pursuing him** - but it didn't
- So here we are in **chapter 26** - and **David** engineers another opportunity to **get close to Saul**

- David is out to **prove the point** - that it is a **futile exercise for Saul** to continue pursuing him - because God is not with Saul - God is with David
- **David** and his off-sider **Abishai** - in v7 - **sneak into Saul's camp**
- Saul is **asleep** with all his **men** around him **to protect him**
- Next to where Saul is lying is a **jug** (water) and Saul's **spear**. Saul's spear is a **symbol of his kingdom** - wherever he goes - indoors or outdoors - his **spear goes with him** - to show he is the king
- **Abishai** is ready to run Saul through with the spear - in v8 - he's so confident one **thrust of the spear** will be enough
- But **Abishai's way is the way the world** thinks today - payback - revenge - Saul deserves what's coming to him - let's take the kingship by force!
- But that's **not God's way!**
- David realizes God's way is **having faith** in God's **plan** and having faith in God's **timing** (which is always **perfect**)
- See v9 - so David says to Abishai, "**Don't destroy him! Who can lay a hand on the LORD's anointed and be **guiltless?****"
- David has **respect for Saul** - because Saul is still the **king anointed by God**
- As far as David is concerned - **God will be the one to hand out any consequences** for Saul's wicked behaviour - see v10. David realizes either God will **punish** Saul - or Saul will die of **natural causes** - or die in **battle** - whatever way it happens - that's **God's planning** and God's **timing**
- And David knows that **he** is now God's anointed - and he knows it's **up to God to hand him the kingship** in God's own perfect timing- and it's not up to David to take the kingship for himself
- So instead David **takes Saul's jug and spear**

- Taking *Saul's spear* - is a *symbol of David taking Saul's kingship* one day
- And look at v12 - David has some *supernatural help* - *God* put Saul and all his *camp mates* into a *deep sleep* - so David could get so close to Saul
- God's way - is having faith in God's plan and in God's timing
- Application - what about us?

Do we get *impatient* waiting for God's plan to work out?

Do we *jump the gun* and try to *help God* with his plan? [remember how *Abraham and Sarah* - were promised a son - but they got impatient waiting and jumped the gun - and Abraham slept with Sarah's maidservant Hagar - and had a son called Ishmael - but that wasn't the son God promised - and there were huge consequences]

Are we *tempted to sin* - to get things happening *quicker*? That's what Abraham and Sarah did?

Is *what we want* to happen *more important than* what *God wants* to happen?

God's way looks like - Having faith in God's plan and in God's timing

## 2. God's way looks like - Exposing Sin (1 Samuel 26:13-20)

[PowerPoint 3b-exposing sin]

2<sup>nd</sup>, God's way looks like - *exposing sin* - that's in 1 Samuel 26 - vv13-20

- See V13 - David returns to the other side of the hill away from Saul's camp
- And he *calls to Abner*, who was supposed to have guarded Saul
- And he shows him the *evidence of the jug and the spear*
- Saul hears that it's David calling
- David asks Saul *why he* continues to *pursue* him?

- As far as David is concerned, *he hasn't done anything to deserve this* continual hatred from Saul
- David confronts *Saul's motive* in v19
  - Is it God's will that you are pursuing me Saul?
  - Or is it human will?
- It's always *good for us to examine our motives* for doing something
  - Asking ourselves - is this something God would want us to do? Is this something God would be pleased with?
- David also makes the point to Saul in v19 - that his continued pursuit of David is *driving David out of the Promised Land* - and away from God's promised inheritance - and is in effect - causing David to leave his own country and go to a country that *serves false/other gods*
- Also, David - explains in v20 - that Saul is hunting him down - like he's on some *hunting expedition* - and that this is hardly behaviour fitting of the King of Israel

God's way looks like - *exposing sin*

Application - are we *examining our behaviour* to see if it is contrary to God's word? Exposing our own sin - like - telling lies [it's only a white lie], taking stuff that's not ours [no-one will notice], cheating [everyone cheats don't they], hating [they deserve to be hated], being jealous of others getting ahead [if I can't lose weight make all my friends fat]

Are we in a *gentle way* - *not a judgmental way* - exposing sin in others' lives - gently asking - is that something *God would approve of?* - is that *what God's word says?*

Even our *good behaviour can convict people* of their bad behaviour.

Is our *behaviour pushing people away from God and His people* - not towards Him? Like Saul did?

Jesus warns about being a stumbling block - He says in Matt 18:6 - it would be better to have **millstone** around our neck and be thrown into the sea than to cause someone to stumble - and turn away from God!

God's way looks like - exposing sin

### 3. God's way looks like - genuine repentance (1 Samuel 26:21-25)

Third, God's way looks like - *genuine repentance* - that's in vv21-25

[PowerPoint 3c-Repentance]

Let's be clear what *repentance* is:

Repentance is doing a *U-turn* - where we were *once travelling away from God* and away from following His ways - and we do a U-turn - and *start travelling God's way* - we say we are sorry - *genuinely sorry* - *from the heart* - and commit to moving in the direction of following God's Son, Jesus and His commands - we may still sin - but our intention is changed - we're now committed to God and His son, Jesus

And repentance is *not a one-off exercise* - every time we sin - we must come with *heartfelt repentance* and remorse to God

- Back to 1 Samuel 26 and - *David's speech* to Saul - *convicts Saul's conscience*
- See v21 - Saul says "I have sinned. Come back, David my son. Because you considered my life precious today, I will not try to harm you again. Surely I have acted like a fool and have been terribly wrong."

- Saul **admits his sin**, he says he won't do it again - he admits he's been a fool and he's been terribly wrong
  - Saul's **confession** has all the hallmarks of repentance
  - The question is though - **is it genuine?**
  - Saul **hasn't got a great track record** of being genuine - has he?
  - But he asks David to come back
  - It's a bit like what happens in **domestic violence**
    - A poor woman gets bashed by her husband
    - In the emotion of the moment the husband - realizes what he's done - is wrong - and promises not to do it again - and says please have me back
    - The woman out of compassion - says ok - I forgive you
    - Only for it all to happen again
    - The sorry or **repentance wasn't genuine** - after all
  - **Repentance has to be genuine**
  - If someone says sorry to us - it's one thing for us to **forgive** them - but we must also apply **wisdom** if this is a repeat offense - and say - I need **time to see if your sorry is genuine**
  - David is **not convinced** that **Saul's repentance** is genuine
  - He has no intention of returning to Saul
  - See v22 - he says - **Here's your spear Saul** - send someone for it?
  - Application: When we say sorry - is it **genuine?**
- Or is it like the child who gets caught out - and says - **sorrrrrry**.
- Or like when we make **2 kids say sorry** to each other - and they don't even look at each other - **sorry - sorry**

Or is *our sorry - heartfelt* - with the intention not to repeat this offense?

What about our *relationship with God*?

Have we genuinely come to God - with hand on heart and said - sorry

See *Psalm 51* - here's how King *David genuinely repented* later on in his life:

- <sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your unfailing love;  
according to your great compassion  
blot out my transgressions.
- <sup>2</sup> Wash away all my iniquity  
and cleanse me from my sin.
- <sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is always before me.
- <sup>4</sup> Against you, you only, have I sinned  
and done what is evil in your sight;  
so you are right in your verdict  
and justified when you judge.
- <sup>5</sup> Surely I was sinful at birth,  
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

God's way looks like - *genuine repentance*

**4. God's way looks like - Peace (Matthew 26:47-56)**

Finally, God's way looks like - *peace*

[PowerPoint 3d-Peace]

Which brings us to our NT passage from Matthew 26:47-56 [Please turn there now]

Just like *David* - had the *opportunity* to *take* his *kingship by sword* - but *didn't*

The same thing happened with Jesus - when Judas and a *band of people with swords* sent by the chief priests and elders - came to *arrest* Jesus.

One of Jesus' disciples drew his sword and *chopped off the ear* of the high priest's servant

But look what Jesus said - from v52:

<sup>52</sup> "Put your sword back in its place," "for ***all who draw the sword will die by the sword.*** <sup>53</sup> Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? <sup>54</sup> But how then would the ***Scriptures be fulfilled*** that say it must happen in this way?"

The bottom line is *God's plan is for Jesus' kingdom to be brought by peace not by violence*

*God's prophecies* about Jesus being a suffering servant who dies for His people - have to be fulfilled - God's prophecy *wasn't that Jesus would fight with swords* for His people - but *to bring peace* between God and human kind by dying on the *cross* - to take the punishment of our sins away from us - and give us forgiveness

Jesus does have a *sword* though - it's His *Word* - as Hebrews 4:12 says:

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

It's *Jesus' words* that *transform attitudes* and *change behaviour* - and *lead people to believe* in Him - and *bring peace* between *God and humans* - and

bring *peace in our hearts*. That peace - the Apostle Paul describes (Phil 4:7) - as a *peace that surpasses all understanding* - and actually *guards our hearts* (so they are not like King Saul's) and *guards our minds* (so they are not like King Saul's)

*Saul didn't have that peace* - and look how his life panned out

*David did*

Application: have you come to Jesus - the *Prince of Peace*?

The one who gives that *peace in your heart* - *knowing* you're *forgiven* and have the promise of *eternal life*

And are you offering and *sharing that peace to all* you come across?

## Conclusion

[PowerPoint 4-Heading]

To finish up then:

[PowerPoint 4a-What if?]

*What if David had killed Saul?* After all Saul deserved it?

Well...

- David would be guilty of *murder*
- He would have been guilty of *not trusting God*
- He would have the *stigma* of having *taken his kingship by force* - and lost the respect of Saul's followers - when he became king
- And he *wouldn't have been following God's way* - but his own way

[PowerPoint 4b-What if?]

What if Jesus had allowed the use of swords at the time of His arrest?

After all they deserved it - He was innocent - those arresting Him were doing the wrong thing?

Well...

- It would have started a **rebellion**
- He would have been **guilty** of not trusting God - and **disobeying God**
- That would have made **Jesus sinful like us - instead of sinless**
- He wouldn't have gone to the cross - to die for our sins to be forgiven - because he would **no longer be the perfect sacrifice** - if He sinned
- Then **we** would **still** be **guilty of our sins**
- He **would not have fulfilled God's plan** to give people the opportunity to be forgiven and have eternal life
- And we would have **no hope now**

[PowerPoint 4c-John 4:34]

But **Jesus always did the Father's will** and in fact Jesus said in John 4:34:

"My food, is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work"

Jesus' work was to bring peace between God and humans - through the Cross

[PowerPoint 4d-God's way]

Like David - like Jesus - **It's God's way not our way!**

Let's pray...