

# A Breach of Faith

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[0:00] We've been reading in our D-Group reading plan, we've been reading through 1 Chronicles. If you want to follow along in that reading plan, I think there's still some books back there on that back table, those white books, and there is a reading plan in there and memory verses for the year.

But we've been reading through that, and if you have been reading through that, you went through a great labor of love, and I hear the laughter, because the first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles are all nonstop, just genealogies.

And so you were reading through it going, Lord, speak to me, please, right? I'm getting nothing out of this. But the reality is, we still need to read those passages.

We need to be familiar with those parts of the Bible. We don't, your diet cannot consist of Twinkies and chicken nuggets, right?

And a lot of times, your Bible reading is that way. You only want to read the passages that immediately give you satisfaction. You skim across the rest of it and don't realize that it's the whole counsel of God that we need.

[1:21] So even in those parts, we've got to labor through that a little bit and learn to appreciate some of that content. And then you come to chapter 10, and there was a relief.

There was actually some narrative section there, and it began talking about Saul and his sons. And as I read through that, there was a great point in there.

I thought this would be a good inner, what do you call it, inner mission between maybe sermon series as I am looking to preach through a book of the Bible.

And so we've gone through this series talking about our testimony and how important that is. And we talked about the before and the how and the now. And hopefully you're working on that testimony.

And on our Facebook page, there is that worksheet that you can go through and work on that. If you're in a dGroup, you're working on that with your dGroup. If not, you need to work on it.

[2:25] I'm going to be putting together a notebook, and we're going to call it the Lamb's Book of Life. And in there, it's going to be testimony after testimony of people in our church that have been changed by God.

And if I take that page out of there, your name is removed from the Lamb's Book. No, I'm just kidding. But it's just hopefully a reflection of the reality in heaven.

These people have been changed by Jesus, and we've got a story to tell. And our story becomes the platform of our ministry. God's going to use what's happened in your life as the springboard for you to proclaim Christ to the people that live around you.

And so you've got to work on that testimony. And we're working on it in a way that's going to condense it so that you could share it in like three to five minutes. Now, you can elaborate on it and tell a testimony that's like a novel, right?

And you could tell it. It'd take you a week to share all the details of your story. But what we're trying to do is follow the pattern of Scripture where Paul gives his testimony.

[3:36] We're trying to conform to that. And if you read through that, you realize that it only takes about 40 seconds to read through his testimony. Right? Right? So it doesn't take you necessarily telling your testimony in a great lengthy thing where there's so much detail that people are like, you know, falling out the window.

It's just a testimony that gives the fundamental pieces that people need to hear to see that you have a before and you have an encounter with Jesus that changed your life.

And now your life is different. And in doing that, you're able to use that as the springboard to proclaim the gospel. And that's what we need. So continue to work on that.

And so today's a little relief. I know there's going to be some coming in, you know, later. And maybe right as the invitation time starts or so, they'll be moseying in and going, they started early.

Or something. I don't know what they're going to do. But people wake up with a time change and they've gone one way or the other and they're just messed up. Okay? Just love them as they come in. Okay? Today, we are looking at 1 Chronicles.

[4:49] And in this, I really feel like there's some good encouragement for us in avoiding the fall of the faithful. This is a great passage because after all of those genealogies, you just wonder, you're going through, I mean, you're laboring through, you're getting to the end of it.

And you're like, well, what is he going to talk about first? What's going to be the significant thing that he's going to lead into after going through all this genealogical information?

And he steps into the life of Saul. And it's really important because it's going to be setting up David's kingdom. But you have to deal with this tragedy.

This tragedy is just one of those great life lessons. We forget so easily. And as I'm looking around this room, I realize that there are young people in our room.

And when I say young, I just mean younger than me, right? The older you get, everybody's a young person, right? But really, keep in mind that everybody in this room doesn't have the same life experience.

[6:01] They don't have the same experiences with history, right? If you think about it, there are many in this room who have never lived a day without GPS.

GPS. Their whole life. They only have, they've never had to learn directions because they've got a GPS.

There's people in here that have never lived without internet. Now, there's, you know, most of us.

Well, no, there's some of us that are a little older, maybe. Some of you. Just kidding.

Wi-Fi. Google. Their whole life has been with these things. They've never lived a day without these things.

Never lived without an iPhone or a mobile phone. Which means that most people in this room have some experiences that others don't.

[7:06] Some in this room have never licked a postage stamp. Right? Never spoken on a landline phone.

Never used a phone book. Never. Not one time in their entire life. Anybody want a show of hands? Never used a phone book? No, you don't want to show.

Don't. It's all right. There are many in this room that have never watched a video except in digital form. They've only watched it on a computer or through the computer or digital video.

Not VCR. Not even DVD. Like there's a whole generation of people that have never used a DVD. Right? If you say around the turn of the century, it doesn't mean what it used to.

[8:15] Columbine happened before many in this room were born. Bill Clinton was never their president. In fact, most younger people don't even know who Ronald Reagan was.

The earliest president they can recall if you're 18 years old is Barack Obama. Right? I mean, we've got way different experiences going on even in this room.

Gay relationships have always been a regular part of television for the life of many in this room. It's been a part of public education.

Abortion, of course, has always been legal for most people in this room. Prayer has never been a part of their public school experience. Don't remember 9-11?

That was before they were born. Oklahoma City bombing. World Trade Center bombing. There was no USSR in their lifetime. There was no Berlin Wall.

[9:29] So when Winston Churchill made his popular phrase to the British Parliament in 1948, he was actually quoting a philosopher by the name of

George Santayana when he said, Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

That leads us into our passage. See, the reality here, Ezra is the author of 1 Chronicles. He's writing these chronicles, this history, because he is leading up to David's kingdom. Because the Messiah is coming through this line.

This genealogy is actually critical. When you come to Matthew, you'll realize why. Because these genealogies are establishing the pathway for the Messiah.

If we don't have this, then we can't verify that Jesus is actually who he said he was. And in fact, at the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D.

[10:40] and many of the records being burned, after that point, you cannot verify another person to be the Messiah. So if you do not believe Jesus to be the Messiah, you cannot verify another one.

Isn't that interesting? So we come to this condensed version of the history. It's so that they'll remember.

They're in captivity, and they're needing to remember, and these things are needing to be preserved. The first lesson, of course, that he comes to out of these genealogies is the lesson of Saul.

One that they dare not forget. Or they'll repeat it. And not only are they going to repeat the same thing on a national level, but the lessons you learn in Saul's life are something that the faithful need to remember.

Faithful people need to realize that there is great potential for you to fall. Now, I don't mean that if you're a follower of Jesus, you're going to lose your salvation.

[11:46] That's not what I'm saying. The reality is, if you've been born again in Christ Jesus, you are safe and secure in Christ. I don't mean once saved, always saved, like people say.

That means I can be saved and live however I want to. That's not what the Bible says. The Bible does not teach a salvation that doesn't affect your life. So the reality here is that if I am saved, there is a security in this relationship because I can't be snatched out of the Father's hand.

Jesus basically said, you're in my hand. I'm in the Father's hand. You're not going to get out of my hand. So we come here to this passage of Scripture, and it's a great lesson for us and a great encouragement at the same time.

So as I title this, I'm saying, avoiding the fall of the faithful. Why would I say that Saul was faithful? Reality.

He actually started off pretty good. If you read through the story, there's actually some evidence in his life that God's hand is on him.

[12:58] If you look at the account in 1 Samuel, you find that Saul was strong. He was modest. He was brave.

He was zealous. God was clearly at work in his life. It tells us in 1 Samuel 10, verse 6, that the Spirit of God came upon Saul.

The Spirit of God was at work on Saul. This is not a bad start, right? I mean, it's actually a good start. In fact, the Scripture tells us there that God turned him into another man.

I hope that's your testimony, unless you're a woman. That'd go back to some other problems. That's another sermon, okay?

But the reality is, hopefully you've encountered Christ in such a way that the Holy Spirit has done a work in you, transforming you, changing you.

[14:01] You've become another man. If you've been born again in Christ Jesus, then you're a new creation in Christ. The old has passed away, and all things have become new. That is a testimony.

It's a story. You've got something to tell. That was Saul's testimony. Turned into another man. In 1 Samuel 10, verse 9, it tells us that God gave him another heart.

Literally. Literally. I mean, just the transformation of his life changed him radically. And so you look at this not as somebody that's just nominal, somebody that's just stumbled into this position, but somebody that God was at work in his life.

And he had some great highlights. 1 Samuel 10, verse 22 describes the initial modesty and humility that characterized his life.

You see him called to this position of leadership, and instead of just jumping at it, lunging at it, he hides himself among the baggage, the Scripture says.

[15:15] He's not wanting this responsibility. He's not aspiring to these things. And it just demonstrates some of the humility that he started with, some that Samuel even described in 1 Samuel 15, when he said, Saul, when you were little in your own eyes, were you not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed you king over Israel.

This is recognition by God in his life that there was an incredible amount of humility. So, when I say the faithful, I mean, at the beginning, he demonstrated some kind of faithfulness.

This is not characteristic of the unbeliever, but of the believer. He shows dignity in his leadership when people complained about him, and he didn't put them to death.

It tells us in 1 Samuel 11, and it gives this story about how he spared them. He was merciful in this. He demonstrates obedience, at least initially, because he's following the words of Samuel.

Samuel's giving him advice and guiding him through the process, giving him the words of God so that he'll set the kingdom up right. And he's following. He's actually doing the things that he's been called to do, and he's demonstrating obedience.

[16:41] So, I say faithful. Why do I say fatal? Well, because Saul is destroyed.

And so, when we get through the genealogy and come to chapter 10, the heading says, the death of Saul and his sons.

And this begins now some narrative content that as you're reading, you're starting to get a little relief, okay? Your mind is not so bogged down on some great children's names if you're having babies, if you're still in that phase.

I mean, there are some great names. Shemamiah, Azrakam. I mean, I was thinking, you know, if Brandi and I had another. Zichri.

What a name. You know? Barakaya. Sounds like barracuda. You know what I mean? Cool. And then your mind is relieved.

[17:48] You come to chapter 10. Now, the Philistines fought against Israel and the men of Israel fled before the Philistines and fell slain on Mount Gilboa.

And these are the lessons now. Some things that you don't want to forget. Some things that if you're not careful because you're not, you weren't alive during these things that happened that were so important that you'll lose sight of this and you'll lose the lessons and you're doomed to repeat some of the same fatal, fatal flaws because what this is going to lead to is Saul's death.

Him being deposed and being king. Being removed. The kingdom stripped from him. I mean, this goes through in chapter 10 and it's describing him being surrounded by Philistines.

The people routed. You guys weren't alive during this part, but you need to know the absolute horror of war. The people of Israel were fleeing in all directions and being cut down.

Even to the point where the mighty king Saul is zeroed in on by the archers and he's wounded and it comes to the place where he asks his armor bearer, isn't it ironic that he would ask an armor bearer to take his life when David was his armor bearer at one point.

[19:19] And the armor bearer refuses just like David did. And so what does Saul do? Saul falls on his sword and kills himself after Jonathan is killed, after his sons are killed.

You might have forgotten that, Israel. You know how bad it was? It was bad. Tragic consequences of unfaithfulness.

When you look at what's happened here, it's happened as a direct result of the hand of God. You read the account and Saul fell on his sword.

But when you come to verse 14, notice how he says it. Therefore, the Lord put him to death. So you're getting the circumstances of Saul's life where on the surface, no, he committed suicide.

He took his own life. But when you're thinking according to the sovereignty of God and that God is working through the affairs of man, that the reality is that God brought these circumstances about and God was at work, the scripture says God put him to death.

[20:39] Why? Because of unfaithfulness. Summary of Saul's life identifies two critical failures failures that destroyed his walk with God.

And it led to fatal consequences. Fatal. It was fatal for him. It was fatal for his sons. It was fatal for the men of Israel. It was fatal for the nation. It led to a contrast between Saul and David so that it would set up the kingdom of David, the line of the Messiah, and now David's kingdom is going to be seen in dramatic contrast to Saul's.

And so it's a great warning and a great encouragement. Two critical failures that will lead to the ruin of the faithful and points to our need for Christ who alone can preserve us.

So today, if you don't learn from the failures of the faithful, just know you're doomed to repeat them. So learn. I've got to learn this.

I've got to know this. I've got to remind myself of these things over and over and over again. So why do I say failures? Well, I say failures because this is the word that he uses in verse 13.

[22:08] It says in the beginning of our passage, did we read the passage? Did I ever read it? No. See, I keep doing that. Let's stand together. Here's our passage. Here's our focal passage, okay?

We're going to stand in honor of God's word and the reading of it, but also it's a focal point for us. So we want to pay attention to this. Verse 13.

So Saul died for his breach of faith. He broke faith with the Lord in that he did not keep the command of the Lord and also consulted a medium seeking guidance.

He did not seek guidance from the Lord. Therefore, the Lord put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David, the son of Jesse.

Father, we pray that you would just bless your word today. We know that your Holy Spirit uses your word in our hearts in ways that we don't even understand. your Holy Spirit takes your word, which is living and active and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, Lord, and uses it in our hearts.

[23:27] It is a discerner of thoughts and intents in our heart, according to your word. And Lord, we need it. It is the nourishment we need.

We need to digest your word and soak it in and allow every bit of nutrition from your word to be applied to every part of our spiritual being.

And although we don't understand how it fortifies us and strengthens us, we know it does. So Lord, speak today and encourage us as we listen to your voice in your word.

So Lord, be with us today. In Christ's name we pray. Amen. He uses the phrase a breach of faith. It's the same language that you read earlier in chapter 9 where it says and Judah was taken into exile in Babylon and it says because of their breach of faith.

[24:39] Same thing. The consequences of unfaithfulness. And so really the message in this as we're looking at this is it's why is he telling us this?

So that you'll avoid the consequences of unfaithfulness. So that you'll see the unfaithfulness in the life of Saul and that you'll avoid this and you'll look to David as more of an example of what is supposed to be because David is going to be the shadow or the type of Christ.

You need Christ. You can't do this. You do this on your own. You live the life of Saul. You come to Christ and you take Christ into your heart and into your mind and into your life and with Christ you can please God.

And so it's the contrast of your life. You want to be faithful? Hold on to Christ and cling to Christ. He's like David. You be like him.

And when you see somebody that's walking with Jesus that's why Paul said imitate me as I imitate Christ. It's because of their breach of faith.

[25:53] It's the Hebrew word *ma'al*. It means to act unfaithfully or treacherously. As an example this word is used in describing adultery and the effect it has on a spouse.

Anyone who's experienced that understands the deep heartfelt treachery of this. Right? It is a breach of trust. A breach of faith.

faith. This Saul had been unfaithful to the Lord and so this breach implies a breaking or a violation and when it's talking about faith it is a failure to adhere to a commitment or obligation.

There's some sense of obligation that has been absolutely broken and it is deep heartfelt. And then he says it another way so in verse 13 he says so Saul died for his breach of faith and then it says he broke faith with the Lord in that he did not keep the commandment one and that he did not seek guidance from the Lord or he sought he consulted the medium seeking guidance from them.

So the two things he broke faith. The second time he uses this phrase it's a little different in that it's an act of turning away from and a betrayal of trust.

[27:28] Betraying a standard or an expectation that was supposed to be upheld. So let's say just as an example a president is supposed to be responsible for guarding the border.

Amen? Okay. And so a breach is a break. If there's a breach in a wall there's a hole in a wall and so when somebody is attacking a fortress they will focus on one part of the wall and they'll bombard that part of the wall until there's an opening.

They've breached the wall they've made an opening now the fidelity of the wall is broken and now they flood in and they overwhelm and overtake a city.

This is what's happened with Saul because of his unfaithfulness. This is what happens with you or with me in our unfaithfulness to God.

There's a breach or break it's like adultery that's heartfelt and that is treacherous. We've turned we've betrayed a standard in a sense an expectation the truth is we are fatally flawed and apart from the work of Christ in our hearts we will not be what God has called us to be.

[28:50] Apart from the presence of his Holy Spirit which we have indwelling us as believers convicting us through his word without the Holy Spirit's work we are sinners separated from God all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

We have a fatal flaw in our sinfulness and the scripture says that because of our sinfulness there are consequences to sin the wages as we've said over and over again the wages of sin is death. So it's not out of God's character to punish unfaithfulness in fact it is actually the expectation that he's described for us. So I say these are fatal failures of the faithful and you and I are in danger we have to consider this reality.

So what are these fatal failures? Number one he did not keep God's word. God expects us to faithfully keep his word.

When it uses this word keep here this is consistent meaning in the Hebrew and the Old Testament and the Greek words that are used in the New Testament keep means to guard to watch over to take hold of something and to take it into your possession so that you guard it right?

[30:16] So if somebody was to throw hundred dollar bills on the floor maybe not during church you might feel like people are watching I'm going to be a little more careful about this but if if you're in a crowd and hundred dollar bills are thrown on the ground you or someone you know may be tempted to scramble on the ground and gather those up right?

Because they're I mean it's lots of money and if you're gathering it up and you gather a pile of it you can imagine getting that pile into your possession and and people are clamoring for it people are grabbing for it and you're you're fending them off right?

You're keeping them away because you've got it into your possession you're going to hold on to it and then you're going to take it and you're going to maybe if there's enough you could put it in your wallet or you're going to have to put it in something to keep it safe and you're going to keep this you're going to guard it you've taken it into your possession now you're holding on to it you're taking responsibility for it and and this is the idea that's being communicated here something that Saul failed to do God has spoken and it's the great truth God speaks he means what he says right? it's the reality of the scripture the account that it's referring to is when Saul of course was asked to by God to deal with the Amalekites and he decided to destroy what he thought was bad and to preserve what he kept what he thought was good that's the way the scripture words it he kept the good and then he destroyed everything else he committed it to destruction isn't that interesting that he kept what he thought was good he didn't keep God's word and it's the contrast he kept the wrong stuff God wanted him to keep his word that was the most valuable thing that he could have done if he would have obeyed God if he would have listened to God's word made application to his life it would have been a blessing for him but he thought based on what he saw with his own eyes this stuff's valuable I know what God said but this is going to be valuable and I'm going to keep this he even decides he's going to sacrifice this stuff in response to Samuel

I took this stuff as a sacrifice it's to worship God I think the importance of that and that was in 1 Samuel 15 the importance of that that you see in fact let me just read a section of it in chapter 13 verse 10 just so that you can be reminded of his response 1 Samuel chapter 13 verse 10 as soon

as he had finished offering the burnt offering behold Samuel came and Saul went out to meet him and greet him Samuel said what have you done isn't that the message of a parent to a child what have you done what have you done Saul said when I saw that the people were scattering from me and that you did not come within the days appointed and that the Philistines had mustered at [33:54] Michmash I said now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal and I have not sought the favor of the Lord so I forced myself and offered the burnt offering Samuel said you have done foolishly you have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God that he commanded you this is what he's referring to he did not keep the command of the Lord and the reminder to us even as you hear in Saul's response the reminder is for us to keep God's word means that we keep it even when we're under pressure to do otherwise he was feeling pressure this is why he acted in his own response he said I saw the people fleeing from me they weren't going to follow me and so I know what you said but I saw the people fleeing from me they weren't going to follow me and so

I'm feeling the pressure of the people and because I'm feeling this pressure I'm going to act in a way contrary to what you specifically told me you ever done that you ever felt the pressure to do something that you knew was against God's will for your life because you felt some pressure maybe as a teenager someone trying to get you to drink or something and trying to get you to smoke some weed or whatever it was and you know in your heart you're feeling just your conscience telling you I shouldn't be doing this I shouldn't go there and yet you're feeling the pressure and you decide because of the pressure I feel the pressure I know I shouldn't be doing this but the pressure's too great I'm going to do it anyway and that goes away when you become an adult no it doesn't it gets worse it gets worse and worse the pressure becomes greater and greater and Saul is this the perfect example of this if you're going to keep

God's word that means you keep it in spite of the pressure around you you look at Saul and you're reminded you've got to keep it not only when the pressure's on but when you're feeling impatient and it's an issue of timing you hadn't come yet in the days appointed actually he was coming right on the appointed moment but it was coming to the end and it was getting so close he's thinking well he's not going to come I've got to go ahead and do this how many times have we jumped ahead because well God's not coming fast enough and so a single person is supposed to wait for a spouse that God provides and good Christian people fall into this all the time and they make terrible mistakes because they won't wait God wants you to wait there's blessing in waiting he said to wait I know he said to wait but I'm getting impatient and I know there's standards for a godly husband or a godly wife I know there's something in God's word very clear about this that I shouldn't be yoked together with an unbeliever and yet a believer will find themselves waiting for God and say well you know what I'm just going to go ahead and jump the gun because I'm getting impatient and I'm going to do this thing even though I know God said don't do this and the older you get the less impatient you become right it never goes away never ever ever goes away you're going to be tempted with impatience you're going to be tempted by pressure you're going to be tempted to think you know better I know what the scripture says but there's got to be a better way for this you're going to be tempted to settle for something that's less than God's will and in essence what you're doing is you're not keeping

God's word you're not taking God's word as your possession and holding on to it you're not guarding it with your life like you would in this wad of cash you're just loosely holding on to God's word and you're holding on to all these other desires and other things and what the scripture is trying to encourage us in is if you're going to avoid the fatal flaws of the faithful this is the first one do not neglect to keep God's word we've memorized the verse Joshua 1 8 this book of the law shall not depart from your mouth but you shall meditate on it day and night that you may be careful to do all that is written in it for then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have good success this is not merely an Old Testament principle that we can shun and think well

[39:17] I'm in God's hand and he's just going to take care of he's sovereign over everything so therefore I don't have to worry about that obedience part of my life but your sanctification is very much at work in this your faithfulness will not your unfaithfulness will not take you out of salvation but it will affect your fellowship with Christ the psalmist

said I've stored up your word in my heart that I might not sin against you I've kept it that's why we're memorizing verses of scripture so that it's in our head and it's in our heart and when those attacks come they don't start outwardly they always start inwardly and the temptation comes and my defense against those things is to use the word of God God's word is living and powerful the weapons of our warfare are not carnal they're spiritual for the bringing down of strongholds if I'm going to bring down the strongholds of my life if I'm going to be a faithful man or a faithful woman

I've got to be the person that's going to hold on cling to keep and preserve God's word in my life Jesus said in John 14 23 if anyone loves me he will keep my word my father will love him we will come to him and make our dwelling with him so James said be doers of the word and not hearers only deceiving yourselves I mean God's at work in our life and the reality I was reading one of the Puritans William Gurnall he said he said God would not rub so hard if it were not to fetch out the dirt that's ingrained in our natures God loves purity so well that he would rather see a hole than a spot in his child's garment the application of

God's word and the keeping of God's word in our life sometimes is going to rub a hole to get rid of the spot but the reality is God would rather see the spot removed if that means I the work of God in our life is going to come through his word and we've got to treasure his word if we're going to avoid the fall of the faithful then we've got to faithfully keep his word then second not only are we going to faithfully keep his word but you see the flaw here in that he as said combined these two things he did not in verse 13 wrong place so Saul died for his breach of faith he broke faith with the Lord in what in that he did not keep the command of the Lord and also he did not seek guidance from the Lord and also consulted a medium seeking guidance he did not seek guidance from the Lord therefore two things so it's the not treasuring God's word not treasuring the truth of God and not seeking God's guidance God does actually expect faithful people to seek his way to seek his face to seek his hand in your life you're wanting his favor you're wanting his pleasure in your life we're seeking God in prayer as we look in this Old Testament context here you can remember in 1 Samuel over and over again the example of David where David sought the Lord he sought the Lord and every one of those situations that he goes through it uses that phrase again and again and he sought the Lord and he sought the Lord and he used the Urim and the Thummim and got the priest to come and he was listening to the

Lord through those avenues the priest was an intercessor the prophet was a spokesman and so here we have David going to the Lord he doesn't go into battle until he hears from God he doesn't step out until he hears from God he doesn't choose somebody until he hears from God and you see these principles that work in a New Testament church even when you're choosing elders in a church you see in the book of Acts when they're choosing elders what do they do seek the Lord the church is actually called not a popularity contest to elect deacons and to appoint elders we're not just looking for people that are popular this is a process where God's burdened us with a particular person because we've seen them exemplify service in the body of Christ and they've demonstrated the character of 1 Timothy 3 in such a way that I say man that person is that and I nominate that person to be a deacon as a servant in the church not because everybody's not called to serve everybody's called to serve right but in these roles there's a specific place for us where we're to seek the Lord and so we're praying over these issues and when it comes time to appoint elders in the church you see the church in

[44:59] Acts and it says and they fasted and prayed and sought the Lord and so the confirmation didn't come until after they prayed did they meet the qualifications yes they met the qualifications I look at the scripture I can see the qualifications yes they meet the qualifications but prayer and fasting in this situation is a seeking of the Lord it's a calling on God for affirmation and confirmation and together after they have prayed then they lay hands on somebody still a place for this decisions that we make you've got decisions in your life right now that are critical in your life things that you need to seek God in go to his word seek his face I need his guidance I'm going to get his guidance directly through his word his word is our ultimate guide it is how he is

primarily going to speak but the scripture also tells us that there is safety in a multitude of counselors there are authorities in our life that God has placed like parents or even as a pastor or elder who's preaching the truth and in those situations as I imitate

Christ imitate me there's places for that where the authority in your life a spiritual authority ought to be someone that you listen to and you say how's God speaking in this issue I hear what God's word says but man I'm having trouble discerning what it means and how it's going to apply this isn't a scholastic exercise where I'm just going to figure out what it says and that's it I'm engaging with God in this God's actually speaking through his word and I'm trying to discern what God's saying for these decisions that I'm making even as a church I'm trying to pray for our church in that way and I know what God's word says about it and here we are in our context and I'm trying to figure out how do we apply this Lord and so I'm seeking counsel and I'm talking to people and trying to get input to this to say here's what God's word says where does this apply I look at circumstances because God works through providence and the circumstances in my life he's guiding me along the way and circumstances doors are opening that only God could open doors are closing that only God could close and so I think of even us praying for a building and thinking man Lord we need a building right now we need it today

I mean there's a big old church with just a handful of people in it why can't you just give us that I mean I can I'll make that argument to the people there that it's not going to fly maybe the Lord wants us to be without a building for a while maybe he wants us to trust him maybe he's going to give vision that's going to actually fit where we're at and what we're doing and we're going to see him unfold things in a way that's just going to give him the glory right I mean maybe he's going to give us a brand new building it's going to be gigantic and everything's going to be brand new and the sound system is always going to work you know as I've been praying about some of these things I've been tempted along the way to take shortcuts haven't you I mean I'm like Lord this is this is frustrating you know

I'd like for things to come together faster I want to have a better vision for the church well let me look up what other people's vision is let me look what other churches are doing what are they doing that works what are they doing that's that's clever and that's put together well I mean that temptation's always going to be there and I've had to resist and sometimes I feel pressure because like we're not moving fast enough pastor we got to move faster we got to we got to put these things together and I'm like man if I feel like there's clarity in this I'm going to move but if there's not I'm scared to death because I feel like I'll be stepping outside of God's will in some way if I don't hear God speak in this here's the deal I'm going to make with you okay if I don't hear God through the process of seeking him in some of these things

I'm not moving and I don't care who leaves is that fair I don't care who leaves I'm not going to act in such a way to try to keep somebody I'm not going to put things together quickly because this is what so and so said is important for our church because this is what so and so thinks they're getting a little antsy over here I don't care I do care it bothers me I mean it does I can't get away from that that's the human side of me you know I'm just I want everybody to be happy I want everybody to come together the reality is if we don't seek the Lord in the things that we're doing if the things that we're doing is not a result of prayer and seeking his face do we even want to do this no Saul Saul calls on a sorcerer he went to he went to chat

[50:47] GPT he went to Gemini that's more appropriate I guess in Google's version you know the all-seeing eye that's watching you he asked counsel from the witch of Endor 1 Chronicles 10 13 here's Saul started out faithful feeling the pressure feeling the time constraints feeling the temptation because people are leaving him and all of a sudden he's making decisions based on that he's not keeping God's word and he's no longer seeking God's guidance because as soon as you let go of God's word and stop keeping it you're going to get off on all kinds of tangents and it's not just for the pastor making decisions of the church it's you in your life making decisions for your family it's you making decisions for your kids it's you and your wife trying to bring your marriage together in a way it's it's it's taking shortcuts and not keeping

God's word and so you're not seeking God's will for your life and you're not pursuing him in that way and there's consequences to unfaithfulness it's always tragic Saul had so many unconfessed sins in his life at this point he can't hear God so the scripture said and he sought the Lord and the Lord would not answer and now he stopped seeking him altogether instead of getting his life right instead of getting things in order instead of turning from his sin he just continues on he hardens his heart he moves forward and now he's no longer seeking the Lord at all the enemy is surrounding them and he calls for his men to go find a witch wow what a what a progression of events first for Samuel 28 7 then Saul said to his servants seek out for me a woman who is a medium that I may go to her and inquire of her instead of inquiring of the Lord and the servant said behold there is a medium at Endor so Saul disguised himself and put on other garments and went and the two men with him and they came to the woman by night and he said divine for me by spirit and bring up for me whomever I shall name to you and he calls for Samuel this is the contrast against David who sought the Lord first chronicles 16 8 David sings his song of victory and he says oh give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name why would he say that because he's done it when he was faced with challenge after challenge after challenge he sought the Lord's guidance he called on the Lord he asked for God to step in and intervene and so he says oh give thanks to the Lord call upon his name first chronicles 16 8 call upon glory in his holy name let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice seek the Lord and his strength seek his presence continually what a word but Jesus said seek first the kingdom of God Matthew 6 33 seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added to you all the things that you're worried about Matthew 7 Jesus said ask and it will be given to you seek and you will find it's not just seeking the stuff it's not just seeking the answers it's seeking him in the answers Luke 11 Jesus said and I tell you ask and it will be given to you seek and you will find knock and it will be open to you for everyone who asks receives and the one who seeks finds and to the one who knocks it will be opened and we're reminded in this Hebrews 11 that without faith it's impossible to please him by faith we're seeking him we're calling on him James 4 8 said draw near to God and he will draw near to you avoid the fall of the faithful guard the word and seek his guidance live hope it's the hope it's what we have in Christ it's why we have eternal life it's why we've turned from sin and turned to

[56:09] Jesus and the promise is that he's going to be with us and guide us through his Holy Spirit I'm not going to leave you orphans I'm going to give you a helper a comforter and he's going to be with you and he's going to guide you Thomas Brooks said your life is short your duties are many your assistance is great and your reward is sure therefore faint not hold on and hold up in ways of well doing because heaven shall make amends for all aren't you glad we don't have to fall we've got the Holy Spirit living inside of us if we're a follower of Jesus we've got everything that pertains to life and godliness and he's never going to leave us nor forsake us to the very end aren't you glad it's the encouragement for today so on this time change

Sunday if anybody wanders in at this point don't miss the lessons in the fall of the faithful because I think it's a lesson for us guard God's word and seek God's guidance father father we come to you this morning this invitation time and we're just reminded Lord of your presence that we need so desperately need you to Lord today I know that there are many in this room feeling the pressure of this world feeling the shortness of time and the need to make quick decisions in their life even looking at circumstances and thinking maybe they know a better way I pray today Lord that you would enable us through the presence of your Holy Spirit because of the relationship that we have with Christ to come to a throne of grace Lord to call on you in times of need that whatever the circumstance that's being faced this morning I pray that we would guard your word and seek your guidance