

Against All Odds: How God's Kingdom Triumphs through Humble Heroes – Week 5

From Lukewarm to Hot

WHAT IT TAKES TO GO DEEP WITH JESUS – 1 SAMUEL 7:1-17

Main Idea: The God of the universe longs for our hearts to be wholly devoted to him. But we often have divided hearts. How do we move from divided hearts to pure...from lukewarm to hot...so that we go deep with Jesus?

1. It begins with pain. *1 Samuel 7:1-2*

- A. The people of Israel felt very far from God (7:1). But it was a godly sorrow (2 Cor. 7:10).
- B. The people of Israel were oppressed by their enemies. 7:3
- C. The people of Israel long to return to God. 7:2

2. It grows through repentance. *1 Samuel 7:3-9*

- A. Repentance involves a radical change of heart. 7:3-4
 - 1. 1st condition: Remove your foreign gods. (1st of the Ten Commandments [Exo. 20:3]). 7:3
 - 2. 2nd condition: Stop the sinful practices, by removing all the *Ashtaroths*. 7:3
 - 3. 3rd condition: Give him your whole heart...serving him alone. 7:3
 - 4. Promise: God promised to deliver them from the Philistines. 7:3d
- B. Repentance involves a certain kind of prayer. 7:5-6
 - 1. It was unified prayer. They gathered at Mizpah (7:5) and were “judged” by Samuel (6c).
 - 2. It was humble prayer. They poured out water (John 7:37-39) & they fasted. 7:6a
 - 3. It was prayer laced with confession...and notice the *national* confession. 7:6b
- C. Repentance involves sacrifice. 7:7-9
 - 1. The people surround Samuel as he makes the sacrifice. 7:9
 - 2. The people see their need for sacrifice. Note the parallel with Exodus 17-18 (7:7-8).

3. It's fueled by God's power. *1 Samuel 7:10-14*

- A. Question: Do you really believe in God's supernatural power?
 - 1. We live in a time when people don't believe in miracles.
 - 2. Christians often downplay the supernatural power of God.
 - 3. But you cannot live effectively without his strength.
- B. Process: God supernaturally fights for Israel. (Note the similarities here with Joshua and Judges [7:10]).
 - 1. The Philistines hear that they've gathered and come in battle array. 7:10a
 - 2. God brings thunder in judgment against the Philistine storm god (7:10b).
 - 3. Notice that this thunder is part of Hannah's answered prayer. 2:10
 - 4. The Philistines panic. 7:10c
 - 5. Israel chases them to defeat at Beth-cair. 7:11
- C. Outcome: God grants Israel peace. 7:12-13
 - 1. For Israel, the peace was lasting (7:13) and restorative (7:14).
 - 2. They celebrated with a memorial stone and named it *New Ebenezer* (see 4:1, 5:1). 7:12.
 - 3. For us, God's power brings celebration & a peace that passes understanding (Phil. 4:6).

4. It's sustained by personal ministry. *1 Samuel 7:15-17*

- A. Israel needed personal ministry and Samuel skillfully provided it. 7:15-17
 - 1. Samuel was different than other religious figures of his era. 7:15
 - 2. Samuel ran a circuit from Bethel, to Gilgal to Mizpah to Ramah (also Kiriath-jearim?). 7:16-17a
 - 3. Samuel built an altar near his own home (7:17b) Think about the others who did this.
- B. You too need personal ministry, and God charges you to actively seek it.
 - 1. God's plan has always been to minister to you in small small...intimate...gatherings.
 - 2. This is why we provide small groups and one-on-one discipleship.