

SEEING OUR LIVES GOD'S WAY

Ephesians 4:11-16

INTRODUCTION: Have you ever watched as a formerly strong Christian disintegrate spiritually? At one time they were greatly used by God and their hearts were fully committed to their God but then a downward spiral started. It starts with just a little coolness. But that slide away from the Person and things and people of God started and if left alone became irreversible.

I. FALLING AWAY FROM GOD IS NOT UNUSUAL!

In the Scriptures one of the things we learn is that falling away from God and away from His people is not at all uncommon: Ephesians 4:11-16. The purpose here is that the living stones are all pointing in the same direction, but what happens when those living stones are all pointing in different directions? 2 Timothy 4:1-4. To correct is to provide a revealing or a testing of someone's heart condition. To rebuke is to correct strongly, laying out the consequences of none repentance.

II. HE STARTED SO WELL!

So many believers start out so well only to lose their first love and fall away. 1 Samuel 9:1-2. Saul started out a very humble man: 1 Samuel 9:18-21; 1 Samuel 10:24-26. King Saul led his people against a foreign adversary and the nation experienced an overwhelming victory: 1 Samuel 11:12-15. King Saul started out so well at only thirty years of age. But after reigning for forty years he died a pathetic shell of the man he started out to be. What happened? Saul was not an evil man in the beginning but Saul had a two-fold problem. First, he would not name or face his brokenness within and second, he would not accept what God said about him. We all must learn to face our own brokenness and we must accept what God says about us: Revelation 3:19-22.

III. WE MUST FACE OUR BROKENNESS!

We all struggle with our brokenness. We are all broken in the sight of our God. The issue is that none of us are perfect yet. So, the only question is "Will we face our brokenness? King Saul would not and King David did: Psalm 139:23-24. King Saul was commanded by Samuel to wait seven day and Samuel would come and make a sacrifice to God, but Saul could not wait. Have you ever rushed ahead of God? 1 Samuel 13:7-14. Saul thought that disobeying the Lord was perfectly reasonable. He learned to redefine obedience to God to what he himself thought was good. God sent Samuel to rebuke Saul but Saul would not accept it and that had some repercussions in his life: Proverbs 29:1. Saul would not face his brokenness and repent of it so his downward slide continued: 1 Samuel 15:13-23. Look at the results of not facing his brokenness: 1 Samuel 16:14-23. "The Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him." Does that catch your attention? Saul still refused to deal with his brokenness and to make the changes in his life necessary to obey the Lord. King Saul learned to live apart from God. King Saul sought relief instead of repentance. Instead of listening to the word of God through Samuel, king Saul wound up listening to a witch. We are told to rebuke one another over and over in Scripture: Galatians 6:1; Titus 1:12-14; Leviticus 19:17. Proverbs 28:13-14 warns us not to harden our hearts. 2 Corinthians 7:8-11. Will you be like Saul or like David in this matter. Will you repent of your brokenness and allow the Lord to be the strength of your life?