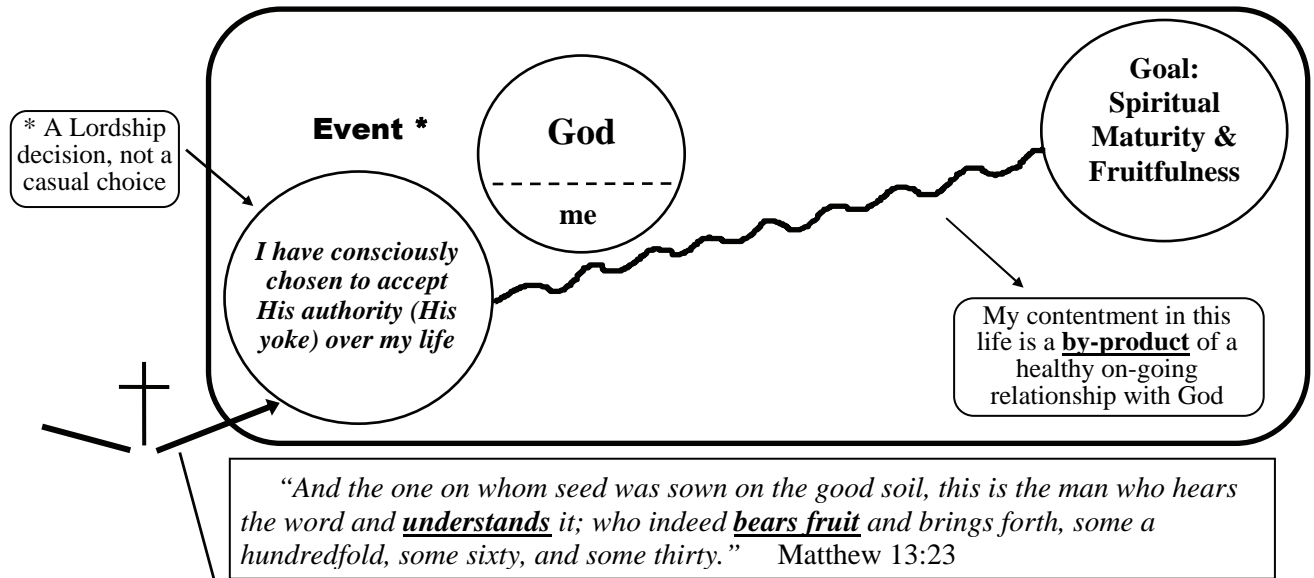


THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IS DIVIDED INTO TWO DIFFERENT CAMPS

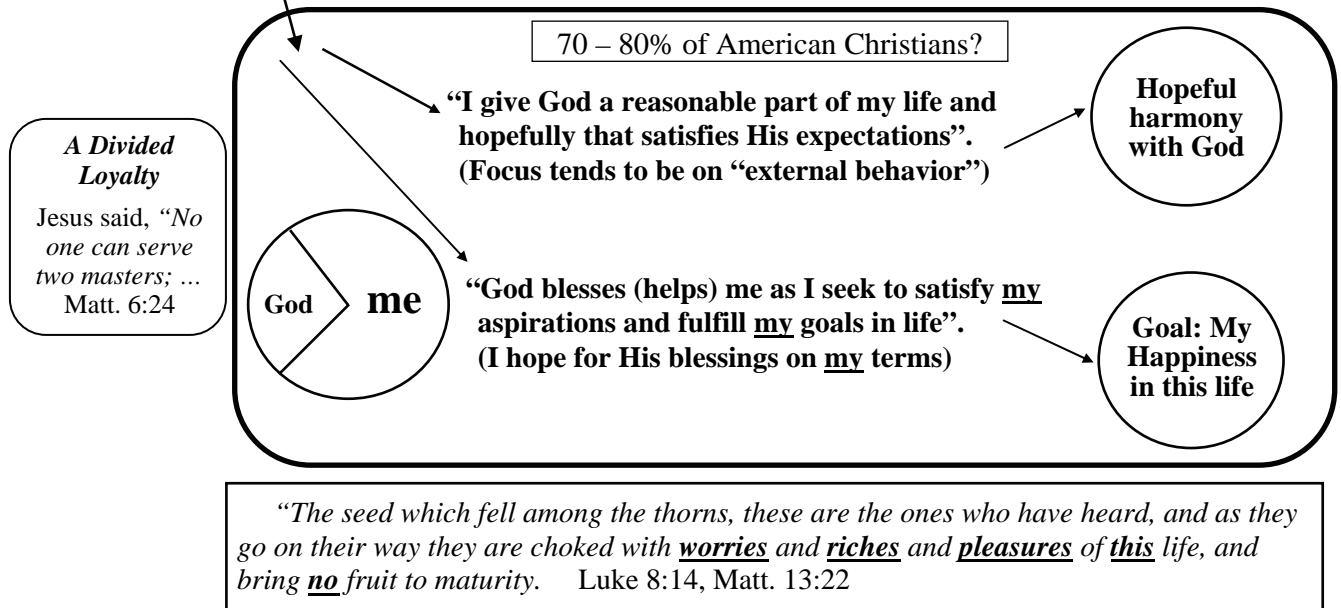
THE "NORMAL" CHRISTIAN LIFE (God is my "Master")

This on-going process includes: "Abiding", "Pruning". "Sanctification", Learning what is pleasing to Him. (Focus tends to be on "inward transformation")



King David is an O.T. example

THE "ABNORMAL" CHRISTIAN LIFE (God is my "Partner")



King Saul is an O.T. example

LESSON GUIDE

THE PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON IS:

- To present the concept of there being two camps within the Christian community.
- To contrast a “spiritual” disposition with a “self-dependent” disposition (see also Proverbs 3:5-6).
- To change the focus of attention from “outward behavior” to “inward transformation”.

1. The objective of this lesson is to lay a foundation for the concept of the Christian community being divided into two camps, the main difference being that of a disposition / attitude toward the authority (Lordship) of Jesus in a Christian’s life.
2. Most Christians perceive that there is a divided authority, with God governing in some areas while the Christian has authority over other areas, and that it is the Christian’s right, or privilege, to decide over what areas God should rule. The problem arises in that Jesus stated clearly that there can only be one master in a Christian’s life. (Matt. 6:24)
3. Unless a Christian is taught otherwise, the natural tendency is for him/her to assume authority over their life, while granting to God limited “spiritual” areas.
4. Many churches and Christians convey to new believers that the relinquishing of authority over their life (accepting His yoke) is a long process rather than a one-time conscious choice. The problem with the idea of presenting Lordship as a process is that it results in the Christian, often unknowingly, assuming that their own priorities have a rightful place of supremacy over God’s priorities. There is a long-term daily aspect of surrender, just as marriage partners need to daily reinforce their initial vow.
5. The discipler needs to discern how the disciple (apprentice) perceives God’s authority over his life. Christians who have acknowledged Christ’s Lordship over their life will often be able to identify the approximate time and circumstances surrounding that event. The reason for this is that the choice to accept His rightful authority is not a casual decision.
6. A Christian needs to understand that God’s stated ownership is an absolute, which is not at all dependent on the believer’s acceptance or acknowledgment of it. An acceptance or acknowledgment of what God says is truth simply removes a major obstacle to God using and blessing the Christian in the way He desires. To reject His Lordship is to usurp authority that is not theirs. Jesus asked, “*why do you call Me Lord and don’t do what I tell you?*” (Luke 6:46).
7. The Christian who tries to serve two masters (God and himself) has a divided loyalty (double minded), attempting to satisfy God while at the same time perceiving God as someone who will help them to achieve their goals and aspirations in this life.
8. King Saul is an Old Testament example of a believer who was unwilling to surrender his will to God, but rather chose to rely on his human understanding (self-dependence). In stark contrast king David is an example of a believer who accepted God’s authority over his life. Obviously David was guilty of grave sins, yet God testifies of his disposition of submission in Acts 13:22. King Saul’s sins may not outwardly seem as grievous to man, yet God’s disapproval is very evident, due to Saul’s unwillingness to accept His authority. **KING SAUL’S PROBLEM WAS ONE OF THE WILL (LORDSHIP), WHILE KING DAVID’S WAS ONE OF BEHAVIOR.**
9. Each believer will either perceive himself as a servant to God, or he will perceive God as a helper/partner to him.

Maturity has to be factored in also. **A CHRISTIAN MAY BE SPIRITUAL, YET IMMATURE.**

KING SAUL (“SELF-DEPENDENT”) AND KING DAVID (“SPIRITUAL”)

Both kings were chosen by God, and God’s presence was evident in both of them. Each was disobedient to God and each was confronted by a prophet of God. Their responses to God’s spokesmen, Samuel and Nathan, reveal their distinct heart dispositions towards God. Man tends to look at outward appearance (easier to be misled), but God looks at the heart attitude (and is never misled). ... *for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.*” (1 Sam. 16:7)

KING SAUL – A SELF-DEPENDENT BELIEVER

(King Saul reigned for 40 years – Acts 13:21)

1. King Saul was chosen by God, and the Holy Spirit was evidenced in his life. (1 Sam. 9-10 & 28:19)

1 Sam. 9:2 ... Saul, a choice and handsome man, and there was not a more handsome person than he among the sons of Israel; from his shoulders and up he was taller than any ...

1 Sam. 9:17 When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said to him, “Behold, the man of whom I spoke to you! This one shall rule over My people.”

1 Sam. 10:6-7 (Samuel said) Then the Spirit of the Lord will come upon you mightily, and you shall prophesy with them and be changed into another man. ... for God is with you.

1 Sam. 10:9-10 Then it happened when he turned his back to leave Samuel, God changed his heart; and all those signs came about on that day. When they came to the hill there, behold, a group of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him mightily, so that he prophesied among them.

2. King Saul’s outward appearance was very attractive and acceptable to the people.

1 Sam. 10:22-24 ... he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. Samuel said to all the people, “Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen? Surely there is no one like him among all the people.” ...

3. King Saul was given a simple command - to wait for Samuel to come to offer the sacrifice to God.

1 Sam. 10:8 (Samuel said) “And you shall go down before me to Gilgal; and behold, I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings and sacrifice peace offerings. You shall wait seven days until I come to you and show you what you should do.”

Note: On the seventh day, the day Samuel was to arrive, Saul decided he could wait no longer and unlawfully took on himself the priestly responsibility of **offering** community sacrifice. (See Lev. 6:8-13)

1 Sam. 13:8-14

:8 Now he waited seven days, according to the appointed time set by Samuel, but Samuel did not come to Gilgal; and the people were scattering from him.

:9 So Saul said, “Bring to me the burnt offering and the peace offerings.” And he offered the burnt offering.

- :10** *As soon as he finished offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him and to greet him.*
- :11** *But Samuel said, “What have you done?” And Saul said, “**Because I saw** that the people were scattering from me, **and** that you did not come within the appointed days, **and** that the Philistines were assembling at Michmash,*
- :12** ***therefore** I said, ‘Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not asked the favor of the Lord.’ So I forced myself and offered the burnt offering.”*
- :13** *Samuel said to Saul, “You have acted **foolishly**; you have **not kept** the commandment of the Lord your God, which He commanded you, for now the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever.*
- :14** *“But now your kingdom shall not endure. The Lord has sought out for Himself **a man after His own heart**, and the Lord has appointed him as ruler over His people, **because you have not kept** what the Lord commanded you.”*

4. King Saul was given another command, but disobeyed again and was confronted by Samuel. (1 Sam. 15:1-35)

- :1-3** *Then Samuel said to Saul, ... “Thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘I will punish Amalek ... ‘Now go and strike Amalek and utterly **destroy all** that he has, and **do not spare him**; but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.’ ”*
- :4-7** *... Saul came to the city of Amalek and set an ambush in the valley. ... Saul defeated the Amalekites, ...*

a. Saul once again chose to follow his own reasoning rather than follow instructions that didn’t seem to concur with his human understanding.

- :8-9** *He captured Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But **Saul and the people spared Agag** and the **best of the sheep**, the **oxen**, the **fatlings**, the **lambs**, and all that was **good**, and were **not willing** to destroy them utterly; but everything **despised** and **worthless**, that they utterly destroyed.*

Note: What was wrong with Saul’s reasoning?

b. Saul was more concerned about the approval of men than the approval of God.

- :10-12** *Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel, saying, “... Saul ... has **not** carried out My commands.” ... Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul; and it was told Samuel, saying, “Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a **monument for himself**, then turned and proceeded on down to Gilgal.”*

Note: What is the purpose of a monument? One could ask, why was he not repentive and responsive to the Lord?

c. When confronted by Samuel, Saul defends his reasoning.

:13-15 *Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, "... **I have carried out** the command of the Lord." But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Saul said, "**They** have brought them from the Amalekites, for the **people** spared the **best of** the sheep and oxen, **to sacrifice** to the Lord **your** God; but the rest **we** have utterly destroyed."*

:16-19 *Then Samuel said to Saul, "Wait, and let me tell you what the Lord said to me last night." And he said to him, "Speak!" Samuel said, "Is it not true, though you were little in your own eyes, you were made the head of the tribes of Israel? And the Lord anointed you king over Israel, and the Lord sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are exterminated.' "Why then did you **not obey** the voice of the Lord, but rushed upon the spoil and did what was **evil** in the sight of the Lord?"*

:20-21 *Then Saul said to Samuel, "**I did obey** the voice of the Lord, and went on the mission on which the Lord sent me, and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. "But the **people** took some of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the **choicest** of the things devoted to destruction, **to sacrifice** to the Lord **your** God at Gilgal."*

:22-23 *Samuel said, "Has the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, **to obey** is better than sacrifice, and **to heed** than the fat of rams. "For **rebellion** is as the sin of divination, and **insubordination** is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have **rejected** the word of the Lord, He has also rejected you from being king."*

Note: What are the flaws in Saul's reasoning? How does God describe Saul's attitude?

d. Saul finally acknowledges his sin, but is still focused on men's approval, rather than God's approval.

:24-25 *Then Saul said to Samuel, "**I have sinned**; I have indeed transgressed the command of the Lord and your words, because **I feared** the people and listened to their voice. "Now therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me, that I may worship the Lord."*

:26-29 *But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you; for you have **rejected** the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel." As Samuel turned to go, Saul seized the edge of his robe, and it tore. So Samuel said to him, "The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to your neighbor (David), who is better than you. ..."*

:30-35 *Then he said, "**I have sinned**; but please **honor me** now **before the elders** of my people and **before Israel**, and go back with me, that I may worship the Lord **your** God." So Samuel went back following Saul, and Saul worshiped the Lord. ... Then Samuel went to Ramah, ...*

e. God tells us why Saul died.

1 Chron. 10:13 *Saul died **because he was unfaithful** to the LORD; he did not keep the word of the LORD and even consulted a medium for guidance, **and did not inquire of the LORD**. So the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse. (NIV)*

KING DAVID – A SPIRITUAL BELIEVER

(King David reigned for 40 years – 2 Sam. 5:4-5)

1. David offended God and lived out of fellowship with Him for a period of months. (2 Samuel 11)

2 Sam. 11:1 ... in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, ... David stayed at Jerusalem.

:2-5 Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance. So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; ... The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, "I am pregnant."

:6-13 Then David sent to Joab, saying, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." ... When Uriah came to him, ... David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." And Uriah went out of the king's house, and a present from the king was sent out after him. But Uriah ... did not go down to his house. So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. Now David called him, and he ate and drank before him, and he made him drunk; ... but he did not go down to his house.

:14-25 Now in the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. He had written in the letter, saying, "Place Uriah in the front line of the fiercest battle and withdraw from him, so that he may be struck down and die." ... and Uriah the Hittite also died. Then Joab sent and reported to David all the events of the war. ... The messenger said to David, "... your servant Uriah the Hittite is also dead." Then David said ... "you shall say to Joab, ... the sword devours one as well as another; ..."

:26-27 ... David sent and brought her to his house and she became his wife; then she bore him a son. But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of the Lord.

a. Just as Samuel had confronted Saul, the prophet Nathan confronted David.

2 Samuel 12:1-4 Then the Lord sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said, "There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. "The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. "But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb which he bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and his children. It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom, and was like a daughter to him. "Now a traveler came to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

:5-6 Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. ..."

:7-12 Nathan then said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the Lord God of Israel, 'It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul. 'I also gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added to you many more things like these! 'Why have you despised the word of the Lord by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. 'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' "Thus says the Lord, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. 'Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.' "

b. But unlike Saul, David immediately accepted full blame for his sin, and was immediately forgiven. (See Psa. 51)

12:13 Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.” And Nathan said to David, “The Lord also has taken away your sin; you shall not die.

:14 “However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die.”

2. David’s forgiveness by God was complete.

12:24 Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her; and she gave birth to a son, and he named him Solomon. Now the Lord loved him ...

(Note: God chose Solomon to build His temple. Solomon was used by God to write some portions of Scripture. Solomon is also listed in the genealogy of Jesus.)

3. Discussion:

Both Saul and David were believers. One had not surrendered his will (Lordship) to the Lord, and sinned; the other had surrendered his will to the Lord, and sinned.

In a poll, (court of public opinion) whose sin would people consider more grievous? Why?

Whose sin did the Lord consider more grievous? Why?

What were the consequences of their sins?

“Self-dependence” (carnal) does not mean everything you do is wrong (before people), and “spiritual” does not mean everything you do is right (before God).

*Someone has said, “Character is what you are when no one else is around”
(when there’s only God and you).*